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ABSTRACT

Democratic participation in education suggests that communities will be served best when decision-making is decentralized and when people--teachers, parents, and students alike--are encouraged to participate directly in making decisions that affect them. In contrast, the notion of administrative leadership implies hierarchical elevation of chief executive to an extraordinary level of power, centralizing decision-making and control of resources in the hands of a few. It is argued in this essay that the possibility of democratic governance can be resurrected by illustrating that bureaucratic rationality, in the form of administrative hierarchy, is fundamentally mistaken and involves a language of political control through which political and moral claims are presented in the guise of technical necessity. Eighty-five references conclude the essay. Three readings on this topic complete the monograph: (1) "Democracy and Educational Administration" (J. Dewey); (2) "The Case for Decentralization" (P. Goodman); and (3) "Bureaucracy and Democracy" (D. F. Thompson). An annotated bibliography and information about the author are included. (WTH)

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Fazal Rizvi

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EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS

Administrative Leadership and the Democratic Community as a Social Ideal

Fazal Rizvi
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Deakin
University

This book forms part of the EED432 *Educational Leadership in Schools* course offered by the School of Education in Deakin University's Open Campus Program. It has been prepared by Fazal Rizvi for the EED432 *Educational Leadership in Schools* course team, whose members are:

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Series introduction

This monograph series on educational leadership is, in a sense, well overdue. The word 'leadership', with its attendant heroic and charismatic images, is probably one of the most written about, contested and least understood in the English language. This series has, therefore, set itself a considerable task in seeking to challenge traditional functionalist conceptualisations of leadership by exposing why they have been unhelpful. By adopting a 'critical' approach to power relationships and viewing these in the historical, social and cultural context of schooling, the authors move the debate away from the 'bureaucratic' to a more 'educative' view of what leadership might mean. If schools are to experience forms of leadership more compatible with openness and reciprocity, they will need to see how teaching and learning fit within larger networks of social control.

In addition to a state-of-the-art paper, each monograph contains some key readings and an annotated bibliography by which to gain access to the wider debate.

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W. John Smyth
Course team chairperson

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Administrative leadership and the democratic community as a social ideal

Introduction

In his monograph Watkins (1986) suggests that a certain tension exists between the traditional concept of administrative leadership and the notions of community and democratic educational administration currently being developed in Victorian education and, to a lesser extent, elsewhere in Australia. He argues that the traditional concept of administrative leadership represents an acceptance of a range of values which include bureaucratic control and hierarchical accountability, and that these values are incompatible with the values of collaborative decision making and community-based educational improvement. The rhetoric of the recent Ministerial Papers (Education Department of Victoria 1983) would certainly seem to support Watkins's conclusion. Among the principles upon which the ideological thrust of the Ministerial Papers is based are 'genuine devolution of authority and responsibility to the school community' and 'collaborative decision-making processes'. Educational bureaucracy is asked to become 'responsive' to the democratically expressed wishes of the community. Now, if we are to take the Ministerial rhetoric seriously then the values of uniformity, hierarchical accountability, managerial expertise and system-wide efficiency, values which are most commonly associated with the notion of administrative leadership, would certainly seem to be out of place.

The tension between the values of democratic participation and administrative leadership has been long noted (see, for example, Brager & Specht 1969). Indeed, each of these values has been, and continues to be, supported by theoretical arguments that are based on assumptions which underlie the arguments *against* the other. Those who champion democratic participation in education believe that communities will be served best when decision making is decentralised and when people—teachers, parents and students alike—are encouraged to participate *directly* in making the decisions that affect them. Their claim arises out of the assumption that real political power can be, and should be, more broadly based and equally distributed.

In contrast to this view, the notion of administrative leadership is one which implies hierarchical elevation of the chief executive—be it the manager, the director-general, or the principal—to an extraordinary level of power, centralising decision making and control of resources in the hands of a few. Those who emphasise the importance of administrative leadership argue that it is only when authority is centralised that administrative tasks can be done effectively and efficiently. Indeed, they believe that communities are served best only when there is strong and effective leadership. It is assumed that strong leaders, with their expertise, technical know-how and experience, can solve administrative problems more efficiently than could a cumbersome and wasteful community participating directly in decision making.

Those who advocate strong organisational leadership thus present their case in terms of an appeal to the rational and economic use of often scarce community resources. They argue that the complexity of modern organisations is such that without centralisation of authority decisions cannot be made effectively and resources cannot be distributed with equity and efficiency. Yet, as Brager and Specht (1969, p. 7) point out, a reference to the complexity of modern organisations is also made by those who attack strong reliance on leadership. They argue that centralisation of authority leads to corruption and to alienation of those who are unable to control leadership. It is precisely because modern organisations have become so complex and remote that we need to reassert those forms of democratic participation which involve direct and reciprocal social relationships.

This monograph seeks to explore these arguments. Specifically, an attempt is made to assess the thesis, presented and discussed only embrionically in Watkins's (1986) monograph, that the traditional view of administrative leadership is theoretically incompatible with the ideal of democratic participation. In this monograph the discussion of this thesis is largely philosophical—that is, it involves an analysis of the basic theoretical assumptions upon which the arguments for the competing normative positions are based.

It is argued in this monograph that the traditional notion of administrative leadership is informed by a particular view of rationality, a view which asserts that facts and values, means and ends, are logically distinct; and that only factual propositions can be rationally assessed. Given the world view of this rationality, administrative *hierarchy*, and therefore leadership, manifests itself as a technical necessity, as the *most* rational administrative arrangement for the accomplishment of organisational ends. But if administrative hierarchy is accepted as a technical and *rational* necessity, then there cannot be much hope for tranforming schools into democratic communities. However, it is argued in this monograph that the possibility of democratic governance can be resurrected by illustrating that bureaucratic rationality is fundamentally mistaken and involves a language of political control through which political and moral claims are presented in the guise of technical necessity.

The idea of administrative leadership

The concept of 'leadership' is an elusive one. In popular vocabulary, however, it is often suggestive of an image of powerful and dynamic persons, possessing moral vision and intellectual integrity, who, through the strength of their institutional positions and their sheer charisma, command the respect and loyalty of their followers. The concept of leadership thus embodies visions of control, of direction and of change initiated by the few, the Platonic Philospher-Kings, who, by virtue of their greater understanding, skill, knowledge and expertise, can make decisions more objectively and rationally, and supposedly in a way that is beyond the capacity of their followers.

Of course this view of leadership is a caricature and an exaggeration. Those who have written about administrative leadership over the years have had a much more modest image in mind. This has certainly been the case in traditional administrative theory, where the term 'leadership' has been interpreted somewhat narrowly to refer to that process which involves the exercise of organisational authority and the making of those decisions which serve to accomplish an organisation's goals and objectives.

Administrative leadership is thus often distinguished from other forms of leadership, such as political, moral or religious. The activities of administrative leaders are framed by the requirements of the organisations for which they work. So, while religious leaders, for example, may make pronouncements on every facet of the lives of their followers, administrative leaders have authority to speak only on those aspects of their subordinates' lives which relate to the performance of organisational tasks. The authority of administrative leaders is, therefore, not a general one, and derives essentially from the position they hold within the organisational hierarchy. This monograph is concerned with a discussion of the notion of *administrative* leadership only, for it is this notion which has been widely accepted and celebrated by those writing in the area of educational administration.

In presenting their views on educational leadership, Hoy and Miskel (1982), for example, rely exclusively on management studies literature, assuming it to be as applicable to educational institutions as it is thought to be to industrial organisations. They insist that leadership is an important topic in the literature of school administration, yet their review is devoid of any examples from educational settings. This is is hardly surprising, for the research paradigm assumed by Hoy and Miskel dictates that administrative theory is a *neutral* exercise, applicable to *all* organisations, be they industrial or educational. So, what is thought to be true of leadership in industrial contexts applies, according to Hoy and Miskel, equally to schools. While this assumption may be contested, what is beyond question is that the idea of leadership continues to be generally a compelling one to administrative theorists and educational administrators alike.

It is this attraction which is no doubt responsible for the mountain of research that now exists on the various empirical aspects of leadership behaviour in administrative contexts. Much of this research is comprehensively criticised by Watkins (1986). Generally, the purpose of this research has been to discover the attributes of an effective leader so that appropriate training programs to develop such leadership qualities can be designed and implemented. The initial focus of these studies has been on the formulation of the possible definitions of 'leadership', so that functional determinants of leadership effectiveness can be empirically measured. Behavioural scientists have thus variously attempted to discover what traits, abilities, behaviours and organisational characteristics determine how effective a leader will be in maintaining his leadership position, influencing his followers and accomplishing group objectives.

It would be true to say that most of the research on leadership behaviour over the past fifty years has been conducted by social psychologists. Of these the classic Ohio Leadership Studies (Stogdill 1974) and the enormous efforts of such researchers as Halpin (1966), Fiedler (1967), and Katz and Kahn (1966) should be isolated for particular mention, since all of these have been highly influential in educational administration. Empirical political scientists such as Dahl (1961), Lasswell (1958) and Burns (1978) have also written on leadership, but their efforts appear as peripheral in comparison to the work of social psychologists.

Leadership has been variously defined in terms of individual traits, behaviours, influence over other people, ability to exercise power, interaction patterns and perceptions of others regarding legitimacy of influence. Stogdill (quoted in Hoy & Miskel 1982, p. 221) views leadership in terms of 'the process [act] of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal setting and goal achievement'. Leadership, according to Hempill and Coons (1957, p. 7) is 'the behavior of an individual when he is directing the activities of groups toward a shared goal'. Janda (1960, p. 358) invokes the notion of power in defining leadership as 'a particular type of power relationship characterised by a group member's perception that another group member has the right to prescribe behaviour patterns for the member'. Lipham (quoted in Hoy & Miskel 1982, p. 220) maintains that leadership is 'the initiation of a new structure or procedure for accomplishing an organization's goal and objectives or for changing an organization's goals and objectives'. More recently, Katz and Kahn (1966, p. 334) have defined leadership as the '*influential increment* which goes beyond routine and taps bases of power beyond those which are organizationally decreed'.

There is clearly a plethora of definitions of leadership, and, while it is not possible to identify descriptive dimensions common to all of them, it is nevertheless possible to say something about the theoretical and ideological assumptions upon which they are based.

Bureaucratic rationality

The traditional notion of administrative leadership is uniformly informed by a particular view of rationality, a view which I shall refer to as 'bureaucratic rationality'. It is important to remember that the idea of rationality is no more immune to myth than is any other idea. What counts as 'rational' is as much subject to historical revision as is any other concept. The modern notion of rationality has become, as a whole range of philosophers have pointed out, thoroughly scientistic, with the notion of science itself understood in narrow positivist terms.

The theorist who has most clearly articulated the logic of bureaucratic rationality is Max Weber (Weber 1970). Special care should be taken in reading Weber. Weber has been interpreted in a number of different ways by recent scholars. Some have taken Weber to be espousing a thesis which demonstrates the destructive effects of bureaucracy, while others have accommodated Weber's writings within the Parsonian structural-functionalism. The latter, and more influential, scholars in administrative theory have claimed that Weber's writings on bureaucracy should properly be seen as a description of how an effective and efficient modern organisation functions. Weber's ideal type of bureaucracy is thus presented as a *model* for the effective functioning of organisations (see Zey-Ferrell 1979). In contrast to this reading, Weiss (1983) has argued that Weber's writings on bureaucracy should be understood more appropriately as an examination of the characteristics of a system of domination employing rational-legal legitimation. It has been the functionalist reading of Weber, however, which has been more influential on the development of administrative theory during this century. And, by and large, it is this reading which is presented in the following discussion.

Weber's view of rationality centres on the claim that statements of fact and judgments of value are logically distinct, and that only the sphere of facts is the subject-matter of science, whether physical or social; for only facts, and not values, are ascertainable by the observational methods of science (Weber 1949, pp. 18–25). Science consists of statements of fact, not statements of value. Science can provide us with the answers to such questions as: What phenomena exist in the world? What law-like relations hold between them? What explains them? In contrast, value judgments are judgments of the satisfactory and the unsatisfactory character of phenomena, of their desirability and undesirability. Issues of value include all problems as to what should be done in a given situation and what states of affairs one should try to bring about – problems of rightness and wrongness.

Weber sees values as the choices and decisions made by the 'acting willing person' on the basis of his 'conscience and his personal view of the world' (Weber 1949, p. 55). He insists that the validity of such judgments is a matter of faith and that empirical science cannot establish norms, since no evaluative conclusions *can* be deduced or derived from factual assertions. But, he maintains, science can perform a variety of functions relative to practical value decisions. Science can specify the means to ends, it can tell what one is able to do in certain circumstances, it can provide information that might be relevant for the acceptance or rejection of values, it can estimate the costs and consequences (intended or unintended) of holding certain values, and it can analyse the relationships between value positions. However, while science is capable of helping us make decisions in all these ways, the Weberian view of rationality remains dominated by the assumption that values, the moral ends, *cannot* ultimately be rationally evaluated, that they are, in the final analysis, attitudes, feelings, preferences and individual choices of one's own; and that the only practical rationality possible is the rationality of matching means to ends economically and efficiently.

In the Weberian world, rationality thus becomes a consideration which applies to means, never to ends. Weber's view of rationality denies that there are any truths about *intrinsic* values. This does not mean that there are no value questions that can be rationally debated. The Weberian view is quite prepared to allow that there can be propositions, in the strict sense of the word, about *instrumental* value: it can perfectly well be a 'fact' that such and such means are conducive to the attainment of such and such end; and that certain means can be rationally judged to be 'good', but this can only be done within the framework of certain predetermined ends. As Simon (1976) puts it, rationality can be concerned with how things ought to be–ought to be, that is, in order to attain goals and to function. As far as the ultimate goals themselves are concerned, they cannot be rationally determined. The notion of intrinsic value is admitted, but it is no longer taken to have impersonal validity; it becomes something of which the individuals are the ultimate arbiters. As MacIntyre puts it, the unifying preoccupation of the Weberian tradition is the

> condition of those who see in the social world nothing but a meeting place for individual wills, each with its own set of attitudes and preferences and who understand that world solely as an arena for the achievement of their own satisfaction, who interpret reality as a series of opportunities for their own enjoyment . . .
>
> (MacIntyre 1981, p. 24)

On this view of rationality people's moral lives become *ahistorical* and *asocial*–having the culture of existential Robinson Crusoes, if you like. As far as the question of ultimate human ends is concerned, Weberian rationality is, as Wright Mills once put it, 'rationality without reason' (Mills 1959, p. 170). Thus, in modern organisational life, technical or instrumental rationality triumphs over the traditional rationalist concern with moral purposes.

Modern administrative theory is fundamentally embedded in the framework of the Weberian view of rationality. It systematically eschews making judgments on the morality of organisational ends, for it rests on the assumption that ends cannot be subjected to the scrutiny of reason. The organisational ends are therefore accepted as *given*. The task of administrative theory is hence viewed as one that is concerned with formulating rationally designed *means* for the explicit realisation of given *ends*. The organisation itself is seen as an instrument of efficiency and effectiveness, *neutral* with respect to the goals it is created to serve.

For Weber, his view of rationality implies that it is in principle possible to determine empirically (scientifically) the most efficient and effective model of an organisation, a model which is applicable to all administrative contexts, regardless of the purpose any particular organisation may serve. It is this assumption which leads mainstream theorists in educational administration to believe that management technology applicable to the industrial scene is also applicable to an educational institution, for organisational structures are considered to be *neutral* with respect to the goals that particular ogranisations may have.

Weber's view of rationality is linked conceptually to his theory of bureaucracy; for, as a central theoretical concept, bureaucratic structure appears as the most rationally efficient means of improving organisational effectiveness. Weber postulates that as societies change and become modernised they increasingly depend on greater rationality, efficiency, planning and technology, and that the only appropriate organisational form which complements these changes is bureaucracy (Weber 1970, ch.8).

Weber's theory of bureaucracy has been highly influential. To understand it better we must also look at what Weber has to say about authority. For Weber, authority is the cornerstone of any organisation. It directs the organisation towards its goal. Weber distinguishes three types of authority (Weber 1970, pp. 78–9):

1 rational-legal authority, based on the claim of legal jurisdiction of superiors over subordinates in a hierarchical organisation;
2 traditional authority, based on the long-held loyalties of subordinates to families, clans or social class; and
3 charismatic authority, based on the submission of people to certain exceptionally attractive personalities.

Weber argues that authority must be clearly distinguished from simple coercive power. Authority is legitimate, coercive power is not. He contends, moreover, that with different grounds of legitimacy go different patterns of authority. Weber maintains, however, that in a modern state committed to rationality, charismatic and traditional authorities are inherently irrational because they derive their legitimacy from matters of personality, mystique, grace and favour and, therefore, involve inconsistency and partiality in particular applications. In terms of his view of rationality, Weber finds that rational-legal authority is not only most effective and conducive to organisational efficiency but also the most rational because it rests on neutral criteria and does not involve nepotism, corruption and other forms of partiality. Given its neutral legitimacy, then, rational-legal authority is the basis of Weber's ideal type of bureaucracy. Weber contends that the patterns of distribution of authority along rational/technical criteria, such as formal rules universally and consistently applied, constitute the structure of bureaucracy.

For Weber, an 'ideal type' of bureaucratic organisation is defined by the following criteria:

1 a division of labour with clearly defined authority relationships and responsibilities;
2 offices organised into a hierarchy or chains of command;
3 managerial officials selected and promoted on the basis of qualifications determined by education and examination;
4 formally prescribed rules and regulations governing the conduct of work;
5 impersonality between management and employees;
6 career-orientated officials receiving fixed salaries; and
7 administrative appointments rather than election of officials.

Weber argues that the decisive reason for 'the advance of bureaucratic organization has always been its purely technical superiority over any other form of organization' (Weber 1970, p. 214). He maintains, moreover, that

> precision, speed, unambiguity, knowledge of the files, continuity, discretion, unity, strict subordination, reduction of friction and of material and personal costs—these are raised to the optimum in the strictly bureaucratic administration, and especially in its monocratic form.
>
> (Weber 1970, p. 214)

So the bureaucratic organisation is justified by Weber as a technical necessity, as a form of administration which is rationally superior to all others. The similarity between Weber's characterisation of bureaucracy and the modern public school in Australia is not difficult to see. Schools have functional division of labour in that the principal, senior teachers, teachers and other personnel have fixed and specialised tasks which are ordered by formal rules, laws and administrative regulations. Tasks have been broken down into less unwieldy units so that complex tasks can be performed in a rational and efficient manner. The structure of schools is strictly hierarchical and there are levels of graded authority which devolve from the top downwards so that each position is under the control of the one above in the organisational hierarchy. There are, moreover, written documents, specifying rules and regulations, available in each school, some of which have been negotiated and formulated at the central level and communicated downwards to the local schools. These rules and regulations exist in order to ensure formalistic impersonality of interpersonal relations at schools. The principal's relationship with teachers is a purely formal one and is mediated by codified rules which define the bounds of acceptable conduct. Positions in a bureaucracy, such as a school, are, moreover, assigned on the basis of formal qualifications and credentials. In Australia there is increasing pressure on educational administrators to obtain qualifications in this area and therefore become in some sense formally credentialled.

Australian research on educational bureaucracy shows diverse and conflicting findings. Thomas (1968) has identified features of educational bureaucracy which closely parallel the Weberian model and Walker's (1970) research seems to support Thomas's findings. In line with Weberian postulates, Walker has suggested that along with the growth in complexity in our society has come increasing dominance of bureaucratic forms of educational governance.

Pusey (1976), on the other hand, has argued that schools can never be entirely bureaucratic. He identifies a number of limitations of the Weberian model. He argues that 'Weber's model mistakenly took organisational rationality for granted because it assumed that, in principle, it is possible and expedient to devise *general rules which will fit all the particular cases*' (Pusey 1976, p. 16). Pusey argues that schools, more than any other organisation, are characterised by 'eruption of uncertainty from within' (p. 17). This is because teaching, and the organisation of education, is not a mechanical activity. It cannot therefore be assessed on strictly impersonal criteria without regard to personality factors or to social and moral values. Pusey also criticises the Weberian model on the ground that it 'does not admit of any *legitimate* tension between the authority structure and the "psycho-social" realm' (Pusey 1976, p. 18). Nor does the model allow the possibility of any conflict between the officially prescribed order of the formal structure and professional judgment, which is often called upon in education. The point on which Weber's model has drawn strongest criticism involves the assumption that there is a congruence between the formal structure within a bureaucracy, the rank, and the technical expertise a particular official has. In schools, it is often the case that principals do not possess the expertise that many teachers, their subordinates, have.

The view that few, if any, organisations, especially schools, correspond to the Weberian model of bureaucracy does seem to be highly plausible. Empirical findings by a whole range of researchers (see Hall 1963; Punch 1972; Grassie 1973) have demonstrated that schools do not generally correspond to all the features of Weber's bureaucracy. These findings, however, should not be taken as a criticism of Weber, because what he presents is what he considers to be a rationally devised model of bureaucracy, an ideal type, a *normative* standard against which effective and efficient organisations could be judged. For Weber, the structure of his ideal type of bureaucracy is determined rationally as the best possible organisational arrangement for accomplishing predetermined goals. His claim is therefore a general and theoretical one, applicable only in varying degrees to particular organisations.

Now, while it may be correct to state that Weberian idealised bureaucracy does not correspond with the reality of contemporary organisations, it would nevertheless be true to maintain that bureaucratic rationality, characterised as a mode of thinking, remains all-pervasive. It continues to be widely held by practicising administrators as well as by those who theorise about administration. We continue to believe that hierarchical authority is indispensable to organisations. We continue to have faith in a rationalist model of organisational thinking which emphasises a fundamental distinction between conception and implementation of objectives. We remain committed to the ideas of functional division of labour and levels of graded authority. In the workplace, our social relationships mostly continue to be defined and mediated by role definitions. We continue to believe that in undertaking administrative tasks we are, or at least should be, neutral with respect to any particular set of organisational goals.

Bureaucratic rationality has, as MacIntyre (1981) points out, become so engrained in our consciousness that we find it difficult to employ alternative modes of thought. And, as Lefort (1975) has observed, though we may dislike the presence of bureaucracy in our society, we continue to *think* bureaucratically. We accept implicitly that rationality demands that activities be fragmented, and services diversified, specialised, partitioned and routinised. And since all this requires more numerous structural levels and delegations of authority at each level in order to co-ordinate and control dispersed sectors, bureaucracy prospers. Urban (1982) predicts that as long as we continue to employ an organisational paradigm which stresses 'rational-efficiency' above all other goals, we will continue to view bureaucracy as a reflection of the 'objective' needs in human organisations.

Administrative leadership in an organisational society

It has been argued in this monograph that the contemporary notion of rationality is complementary to and mutually supportive of the overriding ethos of modern organisational society, of which bureaucracy is the most prominent form. At a general level, a modern organisation is viewed as a technical project emanating from technical needs. Moreover, it is widely assumed that, while the ends which human beings have may not admit of rationality, organisations, since they are congruent of 'neutral' technology, are thought to be intrinsically rational. That is, there is thought to exist empirical, and therefore rational, bases according to which organisations function. It is often claimed that it is this technological dimension of modern organisations which makes them of great benefit to society. Such a view is most clearly presented by Etzioni:

> Our society is an organizational society . . . In contrast to earlier societies, modern society has placed high value on rationality, effectiveness, and efficiency. Modern civilization depends largely on organizations as the most rational and efficient form of social grouping known.
>
> (Etzioni 1964, p. 1)

A number of assumptions are implicit in Etzioni's argument. The first of these concerns the reification of 'organisation', the attribution to it of human properties. The second is that organisations, once reified in the language of productive technology, are given 'rational-legal' manipulative *authority*; that is, they are afforded the authority of controlling the behaviour of those who belong to the organisations. Thirdly, it is assumed that organisations function according to certain objective laws, their own 'logic', which can be empirically verified. And finally, it is thought that organisations structured in accordance with the principles of 'neutral' technology are the most 'effective' and 'efficient' means of organising human social behaviour.

Now, if organisations, moulded in the image of Weber's ideal type of bureaucracy, are intrinsically rational, then why do they require leadership? This is a question Katz and Kahn (1966, p. 303) ask. Why does an organisation, once it has attained 'a state of maturity', have any 'requirement for leaders, leadership, and influential increments', for, surely, an organisation systematically structured should proceed in accordance with its functional characteristics? Katz and Kahn respond to their question in the following way:

> There are several answers to this question, including the necessary imperfections and incompleteness of the organization as a formal, abstract design; the changing external conditions under which every organization must operate; the changing

> internal state of the organization produced by separate dynamics of the several substructures of the organization; and finally, the special characteristics of human beings as occupants of organizational positions and fillers of organizational roles.
>
> (Katz & Kahn 1966, p. 304)

So, administrative leadership is considered necessary for ensuring that organisations achieve some semblance of formal 'completeness' and for 'ironing out' the contingent human problems which often arise. There is a still more important reason for organisational leadership. While organisations are reified and can be said to have manipulative authority, they nevertheless need personnel to enact that authority. It is in this context that the role of the administrator, or the organisational leader, or indeed the manager, becomes significant. Urban (1982) provides an excellent account of how the role of the administrator is seen by the modern organisational theorist to be consistent with the alleged neutrality of organisational technology:

> It is the role of the administrator, then, to bring to fruition the rationality of the organization by attaining a congruence between its 'logic' and the actual behavior of its members. This task can, of course, only be fulfilled when hierarchical relations (an arrangement of power which is often portrayed as 'neutral' or inevitable) obtain. From his position atop the hierarchy, the administrator–viewing his subordinates as 'human resources', as so much 'stuff' to be manipulated via his control of rewards and punishments–undertakes to ensure that the 'rationality' of the organization prevails over the 'irrationality' of his members. It is only the executive who commands a view of 'the whole', it is only he who comprehends and, in a sense, embodies the 'purpose' or 'goal' of the organization; hence, it is only he who can direct the behavior of subordinates by manipulating the reward structure in such a way as to ensure their 'compliance' with the rationality of the organization which he, owing to his position, personifies.
>
> (Urban 1982, pp. 36–7)

It is within the framework of this analysis of organisational rationality that researchers have postulated a number of images of 'administrative leadership'. Each image represents an attempt to present hypotheses about how organisational performance can, through the exercise of effective administrative leadership, be improved so as to maximise the possibility of achieving organisational objectives. Each image is an attempt at a prescription in organisational technology, a catalogue of the best means for attaining predetermined goals.

Perhaps the most popular of these images of leadership is one that has been inspired by Taylor's work in 'scientific management' (Taylor 1911). The idea of scientific management itself has become synonymous with the development of the special status and role contained in the term 'administrative leadership'.

Taylor's principles of scientific management involved explaining how workplaces could be so structured as to improve organisational efficiency and effectiveness, and to maximise the chances of attaining organisational goals which were accepted by Taylor as predetermined and 'given'. Taylor thus presented a collection of techniques structured around the 'given' of organisational reality. He believed that a worker could be transformed into a more productive 'thing' by structuring his tasks in a manner analogous to those of a machine and by rewarding with higher pay the worker who out-performed his peers. Urban notes four central features of Taylor's analysis:

> First, by fracturing each craft or skill into a number of simplified and routinized motions which require the coordination and supervision of non-productive employees, Taylor literally created the function of modern management. Second, in so doing, 'scientific management' established a set of procedures or 'laws' which exist outside the performing agents (men) and which govern the behavior of managers and workers alike. Third, Taylorism represented the initial attempt at a conscious, systematic structuring of human relationships around non-human processes and so set much of the tone for managerial thinking vis-a-vis human beings as things to be consciously manipulated, as human 'resources'. Finally, Taylorism employed the mystique of science to lend stature to a collection of rules-of-thumb designed simply, as Taylor often expressed it, to 'get results'.
> (Urban 1982, pp. 47–8)

Taylor's exclusive emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness means that scientific management requires managers, or administrative leaders, who can control the work environment in a systematic and scientific way. This clearly involves controlling bureaucratic subordinates without undercutting organisational authority. An administrative leader, then, is a person who can bring his subordinates to accept the validity of organisational goals and devise the 'one best way', from the standpoint of organisational efficiency, of achieving organisational objectives.

Clearly, such a managerial responsibility requires special talent in administrative leaders, and it is this demand that has been met by industrial psychological testing. Industrial psychological testing, clouded in the rhetoric of scientism, has attempted to find 'the right man' for the 'leadership' jobs, jobs which have been divided up into partially self-contained components for operational efficiency. The techniques used in appointment procedures have not escaped scientific management – persons, even leaders, appear simply as a collection of traits in quite the same way as jobs have been characterised as a mere collection of measurable movements.

Taylor himself recognised that his view of management involved a crudely over-mechanistic and cold-blooded account of social relationships; and in many ways, he anticipated the advent of the human relations school of management, a school which, while continuing to insist upon the broader tenets of bureaucratic rationality, nevertheless emphasised the importance of the manager's personal considerations for, and friendly contact with, his subordinates. The human relations school stressed that extrinsic monetary rewards were not the only motivation for labour and that other human values, such as pride and interest, also guided workers to improve their performance.

A number of cautionary points should be made about the human relations school. The first of these is that it did not abandon scientific pretensions. Human relations researchers such as Mayo (1946) continued to believe that all that they were doing was devising empirical techniques for improving organisational performance, which they thought could be done only with a scrupulously scientific study of organisational behaviour. Theirs was research in administrative technology, something which remained necessarily *internal* to bureaucratic rationality. That is, human relation theorists were questioning neither organisational *ends* nor the effects of those ends on people who challenge the hierarchical nature of the leader-worker relationship which is inherent in bureaucratic administration; rather, they saw their task as the exploration of *means* of greater organisational effectiveness and efficiency. In contrast to the passive and remote leadership characteristics associated with scientific management, the human relations school emphasised personable and humane qualities. A leader is now a warm-hearted gentleman who has the ability to *induce*, not impose, understanding, conviction and commitment to organisational goals. Almost always a male, he (the leader) creatively induces in his subordinates a feeling and a conviction that the goals of the organisation are *their* (the subordinates') goals. According to Barnard (1938), a creative leader is able to 'manipulate the appropriate rewards' so that the organisational values become the subordinates' values. The leader is able to elicit motivation from subordinates. For the leader to be able to perform this task, however, he needs to have a number of innate qualities. He not only must possess superior knowledge but also must have understanding, sensitivity, courage, consistency and charisma, the kind of personality which naturally commands loyalty from subordinates.

The industrial psychologist Elton Mayo is often credited as the founder of the human relations school. Conducting his now famous Hawthorne experiments, Mayo (1946) found that many of the problems of worker-management co-operation were the result of emotionally based attitudes of the workers rather than any objective difficulties in the work situation or the structure of the organisation. Workers, thought Mayo, are activated by a 'logic of sentiment', whereas management is concerned with the 'logic of cost and efficiency'. Mayo argued that if this is the case then conflict is inevitable, unless this difference is understood and catered for. He concluded that interpersonal relations in the 'social world of work' was the key variable influencing the rate of production; and that with a freer and more pleasant work environment, in which there is spontaneous co-operation between management and workers, production can be increased. It is these insights which are the basis of the human relations school, a school within the theoretical framework of which most of the recent leadership research has been carried out. Successive researchers have attempted to find techniques emphasising the emotional state of the workers, which can bring about a work environment more conducive to attaining organisational goals. The securing of organisational goals is seen as contingent upon the ability of the leader/supervisor to induce his subordinates to adopt, as their own, goals and norms which the organisation prescribes.

Much of the leadership styles and effectiveness research is based on the assumption that successful leaders are those who can increase levels of productivity within organisations. The emphasis is thus on the means of manipulation and control in the interests of attaining organisational goals. An autocratic style of leadership is rejected not because it may be morally wrong but because 'democratic' leadership is seen as more effective in achieving the objectives for which the organisation exists. Sayles (1966) explains that a democratic leadership style is preferable to an autocratic style because democratic supervisors are able to deal better with production difficulties as well as with the 'human relations' problems they encounter. Bales (1953) argues that managerial leaders need to be both 'task-specialist' and 'socio-emotional specialist' in order to lead effectively; that is, to ensure that subordinates achieve organisational goals. Fiedler (1967) has demonstrated that leadership effectiveness depends not only on the characteristics of the leadership style and the personal attributes of the leader (such as the ability to make discriminating judgments about group members), but also on the *relevance* of these characteristics and attributes to the needs of the particular situation. Situational factors, such as the task structure, the degree of power the leader has and leader–member relationships, affect the form of leadership ('permissive', 'autocratic', 'people-centred' or 'task-centred') that is likely to be most effective. This conclusion parallels the findings of the work of Woodward (1965) and Burns and Stalker (1961), among others. In these accounts it is evident that it is the requirements of production that determine the most appropriate mode of leader–worker relationships. Consistent with the tenets of bureaucratic rationality, moreover, criteria for what constitutes an effective leadership style is located in specifically instrumental terms.

Overt and covert control

The human relations school's emphasis on humane aspects of interpersonal relationships in the workplace should not be mistaken for a reversal of Taylor's behaviourist account which stresses extrinsic rewards, such as the size of the pay packet, based on competitive achievement. Both involve manipulation and control of the workers in the interests of organisational goals which are predetermined and in the formulation of which the workers have had no influence. Both neglect the perceptions, needs and values of the subordinates. Fiedler's model, for example, is concerned exclusively with leader effectiveness, in getting 'the job done'. It does not address itself to the question of whether a particular style of leadership also aids the satisfaction of the workers' needs, or whether the workers understand the nature of the enterprise for which they work. Nor does it concern itself explicitly with the followers' perceptions of the leader. Brown (1974) argues that this neglect is probably a result of the assumption implicit in Fiedler's model that a leader tends to have a formal position which provides him with legitimacy and varying degrees of power, and hence the views of the followers do not matter, so long as the leader is effective in obtaining maximum production from the worker. This assumption clearly ignores the fact that conflict is inevitable in organisations. Leaders can be challenged, ignored and indeed deposed. Administrative behaviour is thus part of the context of social relationships in which workers, being active agents, cannot simply be treated as material objects, passive blobs, lacking any coherent set of values, ambitions, attitudes and perceptions.

This major shortcoming of earlier human relation theories has been recognised by many administrative theorists, whose more recent work has endeavoured to overcome the problem by employing such notions as 'human growth', 'self-actualisation', 'employee participation', and the like, to focus attention on the emotional needs of the employee. Based on Maslow's highly influential writings on the hierarchy of needs (1954), it has been suggested that the form of administrative leadership most appropriate for modern organisations is that which emphasises the importance of leaders' responsibility in satisfying the workers' need for 'self-actualisation'. 'Self-actualised' individuals, it is claimed, need no extrinsic motivation. Leadership is thus thought to be an exercise in arranging organisational circumstances such that the 'higher' needs of individuals can be met. A 'healthy' organisation is one which is composed of 'healthy, self-actualised' individuals, all striving to achieve the organisational goals.

A leadership researcher who has based his version of human relations theory on the work of Maslow is McGregor (1966). McGregor argues that the organisational climate conducive to increased productivity cannot be brought about unless there is some worker participation in the management of *administrative* decisions. He recognises that organisations are often characterised by worker resistance to and, not infrequently, sabotage of centrally determined administrative directives. His solution to this problem is to pre-empt any resistance by involving workers in decision making and thus minimising the possibility of conflict. McGregor claims that management by participation makes for the effective use of human resources by ensuring that the workers are governed by tough-minded self-control rather than reliance on external authority. According to McGregor, successful and creative leaders are those who recognise the importance of 'the human factor' in organisational contexts and manipulate the system variables in such a way as to ensure the workers' *active* compliance to the organisation's goals.

While they are a considerable advance on the earlier, highly manipulative human relations ideas, theories of participatory management, such as the one proposed by McGregor, should still be viewed with a great deal of suspicion. While these theories use the language of democracy, worker involvement and satisfaction of individual needs, they are nevertheless embedded in bureaucratic rationality. Participatory management is seen as an effective means of achieving an organisational end, an end in the determination of which workers have had no involvement. Ends and means are still separated. Workers are now involved in making *administrative* decisions, but not the substantive value decisions about the more fundamental goals of the organisation for which they work. In fact, what this involvement means is that workers are now allowed to make the operational decisions about how they should manage themselves in order to achieve organisational goals, but they are still excluded from having any democratic role in the formulation of those goals. In this respect, participation itself is managed; it occurs within the framework of certain non-negotiable parameters. As Urban (1982 p. 76) puts it, ‘“Participatory management” is a euphemism for “managed participation”’. Moreover, the questions about the nature of work and the essential administrative structures and authority relations within which specific jobs are located are still not addressed. These are simply accepted as the situational ‘givens’. The task of administrative leaders is seen as making the ‘job intrinsically rewarding and fulfilling’ for the followers through the use of techniques of participatory management which emphasise the emotional state of the workers. It is assumed, furthermore, that even the most degrading, repetitive and senseless tasks can be made ‘rewarding and fulfilling’ through these techniques.

It should be clear that an element of manipulative control is present in no less measure in so-called participatory management than it is in scientific management. The essential difference between the two views is in the type of technique favoured. Scientific management is crude and simplistic and takes no account of the human factor, while participatory management is subtle and covertly manipulative. Participatory management is a device for securing greater motivation from subordinates in carrying out administrative decisions which they have supposedly helped determine, but this determination has taken place in the bounded rationality of the situational ‘givens’. The most important aspects of the situation, such as the goals themselves, are predetermined and non-negotiable. Pervasiveness of bureaucratic rationality has served, moreover, to legitimate the contention that only administrative and ‘technical’ concerns are amenable to rational discourse. Any examination of the moral and political purposes and the consequences of particular organisational goals is ruled out of court, as not subject to rational challenge, but a presupposed feature of organisational life.

Bates (1983) argues that this ideological practice is as widespread in education as it is in industrial contexts. Most recent research in educational administration has involved the study of instrumental technical questions of organisational effectiveness and group management, focusing on such variables as motivation, morale and job satisfaction. As Bates (1983, p. 27) points out, many of these studies, located as they are in industrial psychology, revolve around the 'problem of influencing the social relations of the work group through the development of specific techniques of leadership and supervision that would subordinate the group to the "needs" of management: that is, to increased productivity and predictability'. What is evident in educational administration literature is that leadership studies provide administrators with the technology to allow them to 'lead' teachers and students to higher degrees of social and job satisfaction. However, the ideological purposes for which such tools of managerial leadership might be used are seldom questioned; that is, the context of socio-economic relations within which leadership technology is applied is uncritically accepted. In this way, as Foster (1983) has pointed out, functionalist studies of leadership behaviour have served as an ideological device for maintaining and legitimising the status quo.

In the final analysis, participatory management techniques clearly serve the function of preventing serious conflict from developing between labour and management and thus exposing internal contradictions in managerial practice. By persuading followers, in the most participative and co-operative manner possible, that certain work, by its nature and scope, is *their* work and that it will lead to *their* personal development, administrative leaders pre-empt any patterned resistance to administrative authority and achieve congruence of organisational goals and structure. Urban sums up this ideology, and the ideology of the human relations school generally, in the following manner:

> Beginning with the proposition that the organization is rational and the top management personifies this rationality, resistance to administrative authority can only be 'irrational'. Since workers offer resistance, it is up to human relations to 'prepare the emotional worker for the more rational decision making process' by encouraging him to 'accept responsibility for his feelings'.
>
> (Urban 1982, pp. 67–8)

Criticisms of bureaucratic rationality

Bureaucratic rationality, it has been argued in this monograph, is a way of thinking or a mode of comprehending the world. It rests on the assumption of a dualism between values and facts, and between ends and means. In regarding discourse about means as the only legitimate sphere of rationality, it posits a structure which, it is claimed, provides the most appropriate technical means of achieving whatever goals an organisation has. This structure is a bureaucracy. Given the world view of bureaucratic rationality, administrative hierarchy manifests itself as a technical necessity, as the most rational organisational arrangement for the achievement of collective ends. But if hierarchy is a technical necessity then the goals of participatory democracy in education cannot be realised, for participatory democracy, unlike participatory management, presupposes greater equality of power and decision-making structures which enable all members of an organisation, such as a school, to deliberate over educational ends *as well as* administrative means.

A reassertion of participatory democracy in the educational sphere is only feasible if we can show that bureaucratic rationality is fundamentally mistaken, and that the notion of administrative hierarchy is a historical construct, which has effectively depoliticised the workers in organisations. What needs to be demonstrated is that there is nothing necessary or essentially 'rational' about the idea of administrative leadership, and that forms of democratic organisational life which are not filled with the substance of administration and bureaucracy are possible, and indeed essential, if we are to replace the prevailing industrial mode of existence with a communitarian ethos.

Bureaucratic rationality can be criticised at two distinct levels: one moral and the other epistemological. At an epistemological level it can be argued that the alleged distinction between facts and values, means and ends, lacks coherence, and that it is just as possible to have rational discourse about the ends as it is about the means. At another level, bureaucratic rationality can be shown to imply a number of morally objectionable consequences.

One of the strongest critics of bureaucratic rationality in recent years has been the English philosopher, Alasdair MacIntyre. MacIntyre (1981) argues that our discourse about practical questions, both political and moral, has become increasingly 'bureaucratised' and that this has come about largely as a result of the theory of rationality to which we subscribe. According to MacIntyre, the language of morals and politics has been transformed into a language of administration, and this language is above all the language of the management techniques of the organisation; it is primarily concerned with the exercise of authority, the use of legitimate power. But, by assuming administrative language to be fundamentally *neutral* in this way, bureaucratic rationality in effect obliterates any genuine distinction between manipulative and non-manipulative social relationships. What MacIntyre means here is that, lacking any uniform or even inter-subjective criteria for the judgment of moral ends, human relationships have come to involve people treating each other as means to their ends. But, MacIntyre goes on to argue,

> to treat someone else as a means is to seek to make him or her an instrument of my purposes by adducing whatever influences or considerations will in fact be effective in this or that occasion.
> (MacIntyre 1981, p. 23)

What does this observation tell us about administrative practice?

Administrative practice is, according to bureaucratic rationality, neutral with respect to any moral criteria. It is claimed that an administrator acting neutrally is acting rationally. Relationships between administrators and their subordinates are thus viewed as neutral. In a bureaucracy, then, it is thought that the responsibility of administrative leaders is to direct and redirect *impartially* their organisation's available resources, both human and non-human, as effectively and efficiently as possible towards the attainment of organisational goals. Such management of 'resources' is carried out on behalf of the organisation and is given legitimacy and authority on the ground of the alleged neutrality of the administrator's relationships with his subordinates.

Bureaucratic rationality dictates that means be found that match predetermined ends effectively and efficiently. But in the pursuit of effectiveness and efficiency leadership needs to influence the motives of its subordinates, and control and direct them in such a way as to produce maximum benefits to the organisation. MacIntyre argues that a rationality based on these premises necessarily obliterates the contrast between power and authority, thereby making meaningless any intelligible distinction between manipulative and non-manipulative social relations. What this reveals is that bureaucratic authority, and administrative practice, is nothing other than *successful* power.

> The manager represents in his *character* the obliteration of the distinction between manipulative and nonmanipulative social relations ... The manager treats ends as given, as outside his scope; his concern is with technique, with effectiveness in transforming raw materials into final products, unskilled labour into skilled labour, investments into profits.
> (MacIntyre 1981, p. 29)

Bureaucratic rationality involves the assumption that, in so far as moral matters are concerned, we are all free agents; but, as MacIntyre shows, this stance has the consequence of making manipulative relationships between people inevitable. He argues:

> . . . each of us is taught to see himself or herself as an autonomous moral agent; but each of us also becomes engaged by modes of practice, aesthetic or bureaucratic, which involve us in manipulative relationships with others. Seeking to protect the autonomy that we have learned to prize, we aspire ourselves *not* to be manipulated by others; seeking to incarnate our own principles and stand-point in the world of practice, we find no way open to us to do so except by directing towards others those very manipulative modes of relationship which each of us aspires to resist in our own case.
>
> (MacIntyre 1981, p. 66)

Finding manipulative social relations to be neither inevitable nor morally desirable, MacIntyre concludes that 'the incoherence of our attitudes and our experience arises from the incoherent conceptual scheme which we have inherited' (MacIntyre 1981, p. 66). This conceptual scheme is bureaucratic rationality, which, MacIntyre argues, can be overcome only if we reassert forms of democracy and communitarian life, and begin to make judgments, moral and political as well as administrative, *collectively*.

MacIntyre's argument is largely supported by Urban (1982). Urban rejects the claim that administration is simply a matter of neutral adaptation of means to ends, for any such adaptation occurs within a given context which is anything but neutral. Thus, Urban (1982, p. 23) points out, bureaucratic rationality, 'as a mode of thought, can be understood as an expression of power relations in the social world, on the one hand, and as a mystification of those relations on the other'. By assuming the socio-cultural context of the administrative situation as 'given', the modern bureaucracy with its emphasis on technical rationality changes the conditions of domination in organisations from a political category into a technical category. The relation between bureaucracy, a form of organisation, and technical rationality is explored further by Urban:

> The defining element of relations inside a bureaucracy is *hierarchy*, itself another word for domination. Given the world-view of technical rationality, however, bureaucracy does not appear as a structure of domination; on the contrary, the bureaucratic hierarchy manifests itself as a technical necessity (to coordinate the subdivided tasks), as a rational organizational arrangement for the accomplishment of collective ends.
>
> (Urban 1982, pp. 23–4)

Bureaucratic rationality demands that social relationships be structured hierarchically and that there be a group of individuals who control and 'manipulate' the behaviour of subordinates in order to ensure that maximum organisational efficiency is obtained. Weber, of course, in laying out the structure of his ideal type of bureaucracy, had recognised the dangers in the practical applications of bureaucratic rationality. In his writings, Weber (1970) brilliantly traces both bureaucracy's liberalising and its dominating aspects. Bureaucracy operates according to deliberately constructed rules and these rules lay down a hierarchy of administrative offices and the scope and responsibility of each. The holders of any office can act authoritatively only so long as they carry out duties laid down in the rules. Weber argues that this impersonal and impartial aspect of bureaucracy prevented the sheer arbitrariness and unfair nepotism that had characterised earlier forms of governance. But, equally, Weber stresses that bureaucratic administration is always in danger of becoming an instrument of elite hegemony, since it permits the efficient centralised organisation of power.

Weiss (1983, p. 243) has argued that Weber's writing on bureaucracy is understood most appropriately as an examination of the characteristics of a system of domination employing rational-legal legitimation. Bureaucratic rationality, by appearing to be neutral and objective, concerned only with the question of means and not of ends, has the consequence of making subordinates submit their will and surrender their power to their administrative superiors. Weber recognised, however, that:

> it is by no means true that every case of submissiviness to persons in positions of power is primarily (or even at all) oriented to this belief (in legitimacy). Loyalty may be hypocritically simulated ... on purely opportunistic grounds, or ... for reasons of material self-interest. Or people may submit from individual weakness and helplessness.
>
> (Weber, quoted in Weiss 1983, p. 244)

It should be clear, nevertheless, that bureaucratic rationality *legitimises* certain kinds of power relations, control and domination, because the notions of accountability and subordination are built into its very 'logic'.

Against what he saw as the dangers of bureaucratic domination over individuals, Weber emphasised the need for political authority. Weberian analysis indicates that the bureaucracy could very easily obtain a dominant position in society by means of its organisation of information and the 'efficiency' of its executive hierarchy unless it is balanced by a powerful body of responsible, elected political leaders. Weber argued that a strong political leadership has to keep bureaucracy 'in check', to ensure that it remains answerable to the public and to prevent bureaucratic absolutism, and to make certain that in offering them enlightened paternalism it does not treat people as some kind of unthinking objects to be administrated.

The dangers Weber saw in the advent of bureaucracy and bureaucratic thinking in modern life have become only too evident. Bureaucracy has, in many instances, become *de facto* political authority. The television program 'Yes Minister!' provides graphic illustration of how, in practice, political authority is subverted and the administrative 'expert' comes to possess *de facto* authority. In exerting his power, the bureaucrat uses the legitimating rhetoric of the 'Westminister tradition' and the spurious claims of bureaucratic rationality. Parry (1969) points out that in recent decades bureaucracy, with its highly efficient control mechanisms, has become the real power behind the sham power of the government.

Empirical studies of modern bureaucracies, argues Thompson (1983, p. 237) in his appended article, show that bureaucrats are increasingly exercising greater influence in defining goals and policies and in mobilising support for or opposition to particular programs. The research conducted by the Deakin Institute for Studies in Education (1984) into the problems of devolution in Victorian education shows clearly how most senior bureaucrats have taken a stance towards government policies, a stance which is anything but politically neutral.

As early as 1942 Burnham claimed that bureaucracy was, by its very nature, elitist and that bureaucratic dominance was an aspect of managerial control. Burnham (1942) predicted that the distinction made by liberal theory between state and economy would increasingly break down as the state found it more and more necessary to intervene in the economy, whether through nationalisation or economic planning, and that this intervention would require it to rely increasingly on the bureaucracy to supply it with options and other expert knowledge that could serve it to make informed decisions. But the political leaders, lacking such knowledge themselves, would defer to what Burnham saw as the administrative elite. According to Burnham, this administrative elite was, moreover, no more than a specialised elite, a *de facto* ruling group, acting in its own interest.

What Burnham's insights and subsequent experience show is that bureaucracy can no longer be seen as neutral and impartial – it is necessarily implicated in the political process. The distinction between political and administrative matters is thus a spurious one. The administrative leader can no longer hide behind the cloak of bureaucratic rationality, claiming to be concerned with only the procedural and not the substantive decisions, for procedural and substantive matters, ends and means, have been shown to be inextricably linked. In determining some administrative procedures to be more appropriate than others, significant value decisions are made. Moreover, the exclusive emphasis on organisational efficiency, however interpreted, is a goal the preference for which over other goals, such as community participation, has to be argued for in specifically political terms. Efficiency is not an ideal which is self-evidently worth pursuing – especially when it conflicts with other human interests. In the educational context, this is amply demonstrated by Callahan (1962).

The concept of 'efficiency' is highly troublesome, much more problematical than the traditional administrative theorists take it to be. It cannot be interpreted neutrally, without reference to a more fundamental criterion in terms of which efficiency might be measured. We need to ask the question, as Fay (1975, p. 50) does: 'Effecient in terms of what – monetary cost?, human labour?, suffering?, the consumption of natural fuels?, time?, or what?' Fay claims that

> until this question is answered there is literally no way of choosing between alternative courses in terms of efficiency. And the point here is that *whatever* answer one gives will reflect a judgement as to that set of factors which the policy scientist thinks is the most important in situations of this type, a judgement that cannot be scientifically made for it involves reference to the *values* of the scientist.
>
> (Fay 1975, pp. 50-1)

What Fay says about the policy scientist is also true of the administrative leader. In educational discourse, furthermore, it is even more difficult to conceive of purely technical criteria of efficiency, for education is an enterprise shot through with moral, political and cultural concerns. The notion of efficiency is a value-laden concept and cannot therefore be used to make a sharp and enduring distinction between what is an end and what is a means.

Nor is the notion of effectiveness helpful to the administrative theorist wishing to insist upon the means-end distinction. For, as MacIntyre argues,

> . . . there are strong grounds for rejecting the claim that effectiveness is a morally neutral value. For the whole concept of effective is . . . inseparable from a mode of human existence in

> which the contrivance of means is in central part the manipulation of human beings into compliant patterns of behaviour . . .
>
> (MacIntyre 1981, p. 71)

To emphasise effectiveness ahead of other values is to embrace a value which represents a certain preferred mode of human existence. But this preference has to be argued for in specifically moral terms against other value claims which might represent alternative ways of organising social existence.

Effectiveness is, of course, an extremely general concept, and, as there is inevitably a crucial gap between this generalised concept and any actual criteria which might be applicable in particular situations, the question of when and how effectiveness should be judged is of crucial importance. The effectiveness of long-range goals, such as educational goals, is notoriously difficult to calculate because of the influence of an infinite number of contingent factors which are necessarily present in educational situations. On the other hand, it is often not possible to divide educational goals into smaller calculable units, for such fragmentation may conflict with the desire to see educational experience in some kind of totality. More fundamentally, however, any judgment on how effectiveness should be calculated must involve reference to notions of significance, appropriateness, worth, and the like, and it is not at all clear how choices of this kind can be made in a value-free manner.

To claim that notions of efficiency and effectiveness are value laden is not to say that they are arbitrary and can be given any meaning one likes. To do so would be to subscribe to the very theory of value discourse upon which bureaucratic rationality itself is based. MacIntyre (1981) shows clearly that values are not subjective and arbitrary, and that they can be rationally assessed, refuted and modified. The issue of the logic of value discourse is a very complex one, well beyond the scope of this monograph. The reader is referred to a collection of papers edited by Rizvi (1985) which explores this whole area, with particular reference to its importance in educational administration.

Democratic alternatives to bureaucracy

The discussion in the previous section should be sufficient to show how bureaucratic rationality is fundamentally mistaken. It has been argued that notions of administrative leadership which are located within this form of rationality can appropriately be viewed as involving a system of manipulative social relationships.

Bureaucratic rationality, it has been claimed, is a method of achieving and legitimising domination. It has also been demonstrated that bureaucratic rationality is not the only form of rationality available to the human mind and that it is a historical construct, and is therefore amenable to change.

Given this conclusion, administrative hierarchy, a major defining characteristic of bureaucracy, should also not be viewed as a universal, necessary and inevitable phenomenon, but as something which has developed historically in the form it has in some cultures and not in others. Moreover, in its current historical form it has served the interests of some people and not of others. If hierarchy is not a universal and necessary phenomenon then it is indeed possible to conceive of non-hierarchical organisational structures. Whether it is possible to bring about these structures is, of course, a contingent question. We need to examine the alternatives to hierarchical forms of organisation that have been tried in various ways and in various contexts, and assess the extent to which they have worked. We also need to look at the problems that have been confronted in an attempt to bring them about.

Of course, criticisms of the mode of social existence suggested and legitimated by bureaucratic rationality are not new. Social philosophers as wide-ranging as Hegel, Marx and Tönnies, during the last century, and, more recently, Dewey, Habermas, Williams and many others have enumerated various conceptual and moral difficulties with bureaucratic rationality, and have argued for the importance of thinking about human organisations in radically different ways. Each author has suggested alternatives to modern organisational life and, while no single model provides a comprehensive alternative to hierarchy and bureaucracy, a recurrent theme in their writings has been a commitment to more democratic and communitarian forms of organisation. Communitarian thinking has often been presented as not only a desirable but also a perfectly plausible alternative to bureaucratic rationality. Indeed, it could be argued that, at a rhetorical level at least, the ideology being promoted through the Ministerial Papers in Victoria (Education Department of Victoria 1983) represents a thrust towards communitarian thinking. In what follows, a number of arguments to support a case for democratic and communitarian forms of human relationships and social organisations are presented.

The communitarian views of Hegel and Tönnies

The modern tradition of philosophical writings on communitarian thinking can be said to have commenced with the nineteenth-century German philosopher, Hegel. For Hegel (1952), a sense of community had existed paradigmatically in the Greek *Polis*, particularly in Periclean Athens. Hegel regarded the Athenian community as an articulation of the very highest social and political ends. It was a community in which no distinction was drawn between man as a citizen and man as a private individual. Hegel saw the culture of his ideal community as homogenous, mutually supportive and participatory. He saw the various aspects of a person's life – his vocation, politics, art, religion and life-style – as intrinsically intertwined.

Hegel contrasted this perhaps over-idealised view of community with the form of cultural life he saw emerging in the nineteenth-century Europe. For Hegel there was a loss of a sense of community in modern life. Men were constrained by an increasingly fragmented life, becoming alienated from each other. The idea of society no longer involved a form of organisation in which persons met their fellows in the totality of their social existences, and not in a manner which was defined by their roles. Hegel argued that modern life, with its progressive division of labour and with the development of mass bureaucratic structures, had destroyed the traditional communitarian idea of the 'whole man'. Social contacts had become increasingly segmented as a result of the institutionalised division of labour.

Hegel's analysis of the loss of community is perhaps even more applicable today than it was during the early part of the last century. Increased bureaucratisation, administration through notions of accountability and delegation, and demands for clearer definitions of vocational and social roles have all meant that today people are viewed in terms of the particularity of their own personal and selfish interests. Today, characteristically, as Wirth (1957) has pointed out, in organisations we meet one another in our highly segmented roles. Such an 'alienated' social existence is a clearly logical consequence of bureaucratic rationality. In such an alienated climate, as Hegel had so clearly foreseen, there can be little possibility of the concrete realisation of the ideals of fraternity and co-operation.

Evidence of segmented social existence, a form of existence in which persons are not treated in their cultural totality, may be found in contemporary schools. The relationships between teachers and principals, and students and teachers are typically defined in terms of their organisational roles. If students want to study a particular course, seek vocational advice or receive personal guidance, then they find themselves in a *functional* relationship with the curriculum adviser, the careers teacher or the educational psychologist, none of whom they may ever see in any other capacity. Their relationships are segmented and defined by the requirements of the bureaucratic nature of schools. The relationships between principals and teachers in an administrative hierarchy are similarly segmented and, in work situations at least, are defined by bureaucratic expectations rather than any by collaborative or cultural significance.

A major feature of the contemporary human condition has been the increasing organisation and bureaucratisation of life generally. Political, economic and social power has become increasingly centralised, and as a consequence people feel less and less at home in the social world; they have become estranged from the social world in which they live, move and define their being. The modern political state cannot provide individuals with the sense of rootedness and security which they need because by its very nature it is too large, too complex and altogether too aloof from the residual meanings by which human beings live. Like the political state, the social and cultural institutions in modern life, including education, are also too distant, too remote and too bureaucratised to be responsive to the needs and wants of individuals.

Hegel argued that there was nothing natural about this condition. In the communitarian view he put forward he envisaged a reversal of these trends. In a community, Hegel claimed, a man is free and feels an integral part of an *overall* way of life; he is not conscious of a division between his own attitudes to the community and the way in which that community organises and articulates his life. According to Hegel, only a reassertion of a sense of community can redress the balance and provide the recognition, fellowship, security and membership which humans crave.

The Hegelian tradition of theorising about community reached its pinnacle with the publication in 1887 of Tönnies's book *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*. The book was centrally concerned to criticise the baneful effects of contemporary urban life.

Tönnies contrasted two notions of community: *Gemeinschaft* (communal) and *Gesellschaft* (associational). In a *Gemeinschaft*, people feel they belong together because they are of the same kind. Broadly speaking, they are kin, and as such cannot freely renounce their membership of the group, which is held together through its shared emotional meaning. People are born into

Gemeinschaft and grow into it. In this way, the bonds of friendship grow. By contrast, in *Gesellschaft*, major social bonds are voluntary and based upon the pursuit of self-interest. People enter into relations with one another not because it is conducive of friendship, but as a way of achieving an objective. The typical relation in a *Gesellschaft* is the contract, and a typical group is the voluntary special-purpose association, the modern organisation. Tönnies argued that

> the theory of Gesellschaft deals with the artificial construction of an aggregate of human beings which superficially resembles the Gemeinschaft in so far as the individuals live and dwell together peacefully. However, in the Gemeinschaft they remain essentially united in spite of all separating factors, whereas in the Gesellschaft they are essentially separated in spite of all uniting factors. In the Gesellschaft, as contrasted with the Gemeinschaft, we find no actions that can be derived from an a priori and necessarily existing unity; no actions, therefore, which manifest the will and the spirit of the unity even if performed by the individual; no actions which, in so far as they are performed by the individual, take place on behalf of those united with him.
> (Tönnies 1957, pp. 64-5)

Tönnies insisted that contemporary society was characterised by an increasing shift towards *Gesellschaft*. He found evidence for this claim in the weakening of traditional bonds, the promotion of bureaucratic rationality and the ever-increasing emphasis on greater division of labour. As with society generally, social organisations are composed of individuals who are only loosely bound together in functional and contractual relationships. People act from self-interest and engage in relationships only to further these interests. In *Gemeinschaft*, on the other hand, human relationships are intimate, face-to-face and not discrete and segmented – they are with 'the whole man', not with a man under a particular description or acting from within a particular role. *Gesellschaft* relationships, in contrast, are characteristic of modern large-scale organisations which are based on the rational-legal notions of consent and contract and imply a radically individualistic account of social order. Relations of the *Gemeinschaft* type are more inclusive – people confront each other as persons who are treated as, to use a Kantian phrase, 'ends in themselves'. *Gesellschaft* relationships are circumscribed by a sense of specific, if not formal, obligations. To use the current sociological jargon, *Gemeinschaft* implies organic relationships, while *Gesellschaft* relationships are functional.

For Tönnies, the notion of *Gemeinschaft* encapsulated most perspicaciously the values of the traditional rural community for which he had a considerable degree of nostalgia. *Gemeinschaft* is an interacting reciprocating community, but one in which there are fixed modes and hierarchies of status and power and which embody shared values based upon some common, traditional way of looking at things. Such a view of community embodies the importance of notions of the static, the order and the rootedness, notions which are so central to mainstream conservative political thought.

Despite its superficial appeal, there are a number of problems with Tönnies's favoured conception of community, the *Gemeinschaft*, both in empirical and in normative terms. Tönnies's view invites a return to the very political structures in opposition to which modern organisational ethos and bureaucratic rationality originally presented itself as a liberating and emancipatory doctrine. In its infancy, modern bureaucracy appeared attractive precisely because it revolted against the nepotism and arbitrary rule of those who traditionally held inherited power. Traditional communities were fundamentally inegalitarian and rested on the paternalism of those few elites who controlled the lives of the masses.

Tönnies's conservative conception of community is thus inevitably backward looking. It celebrates a return to traditional forms of order, and thus supports attempts to resist change and to buttress the existing power and authority structures. Community is characterised by hierarchy, compliance and mutual obligation between groups in different positions within the hierarchy. The ideal of mutual service is invoked through which social cohesion is maintained, with each individual being allocated a particular place within the social structure. This idea is best encapsulated in the phrase 'my station and its duties'. The parts of the hierarchy are ordered functionally, and are therefore interdependent; but this appeal to functionality legitimates the inherited social framework which restricts human advancement and social improvement.

Although in *Gemeinschaft* social order mediates social bonds, it is also hierarchical in ways that are thought to express the natural necessities of the human condition. In both Western and Eastern traditions these natural necessities are considered to be linked to divine purposes. By invoking reference to divine laws in such a manner, despotism and other forms of unequal power relations are legitimised (see Kamenka 1982). But this way of viewing community is to subjugate human beings to external, supposedly natural, circumstances, instead of elevating them to be the sovereigns of circumstances.

Leadership is extremely important in the kind of traditional community Tönnies favoured. According to Tönnies, in *Gemeinschaft* leaders are born into a particular social class; and they possess, by virtue of their 'station in life', certain traits which enable them to exercise their powers of judgment to lead their followers within the framework of the organic relationship, relationships which reflect the necessary but complementary and functional inequalities in human endowment. Social inequalities are thus looked upon as necessary and perfectly natural, as Plant, Lesser and Taylor-Gooby (1980) point out, either because they reflect the will of God, the natural order of the cosmos, or because they are genetically transmitted and therefore function in the perpetuation of hierarchical society.

The democratic view of community

It is clear that the traditional conception of community, *Gemeinschaft*, is inherently undemocratic. In what follows, an alternative view of community is suggested. It is argued that *Gemeinschaft* is not the only alternative to *Gesellschaft* and that a democratic view of community which emphasises both reciprocity and equality of social relationships is not only plausible but highly desirable. The democratic view of community owes much to the political writings of Rousseau and Marx and, during this century, Dewey. In recent years, it has been persuasively presented by, among others, Bottomore (1966), Bachrach (1967), Kariel (1967), Taylor (1982) and Williams (1983). All these writers emphasise the need to revive a sense of civic spirit, as well as participatory democracy throughout society. They see the need to reform the institutions and attitudes of twentieth-century representative democracy so that participation of ordinary citizens in decision making would be regarded as normal, legitimate and natural. They accuse the traditional theorists of representative democracy of having been so concerned with the stability of political structures that they have ignored the ideals that are embedded in democracy. A truly democratic community is, they claim, one in which participatory structures are democratised and political participation is made more meaningful to the individual.

In a detailed analysis of the notion of community, Taylor (1982) argues that there are at least three attributes possessed in *some* degree by *all* communities of the kind that might be described as participatory democracies. The first of these is that the set of persons who comprise a democratic community should *share certain beliefs and values*. The second attribute of a democratic community is that relations between members should be *direct* and *many sided*. Taylor (1982, pp. 27–8) explains that relations are direct to the extent that they are unmediated by 'representatives, leaders, bureaucrats, institutions such as those of the state, or by codes, abstractions and reifications'. For example, the academic community, argues Taylor, is only partially a democratic community because its members share certain beliefs and values and, at times, there is even co-operation between them, but relations among its members are limited and are certainly mediated through their respective positions within an organisational hierarchy. Members of an academic community thus relate to each other in only a few aspects or facets of themselves. The third and final characteristic of democratic community is that of *reciprocity*. Taylor (1982, p. 28) uses the term reciprocity to 'cover a range of arrangements and relations and exchanges, including mutual aid, some forms of cooperation and some forms of sharing'. The notion of reciprocity also implies some degree of equality in power relations between the members of a community.

Within the framework of these criteria, Taylor claims that the term 'community' shares characteristics which are normally and traditionally ascribed to the idea of *fraternity*, or the notion he prefers to use, *friendship*. Following the Aristotelian tradition, Taylor sees friendship not as an emotional state between individuals but as a feeling of mutual concern between those who belong to a particular community. Friendship is thus viewed as a type of social and political relationship, and is defined in terms of a commitment to arrive at a common allegiance to and a common pursuit of goals and objectives.

The social ideal of a democratic community, as formulated by Taylor, has been justified in a number of ways. The most widely quoted justification can be found in the highly influential writings of Rousseau. Rousseau (1953) saw man as a community-building animal, naturally communicating and inclined towards co-operation and fraternity. Attacking the conventions and restraints imposed upon men by the social structures of his day, Rousseau postulated a communitarian ideal in which all men would accept only such restraints as they themselves participated in formulating. Pateman points out that Rousseau's justification of democratic participatory community life hinges on the

> individual participation of each citizen in political decision making and in his theory participation is very much more than a protective adjunct to a set of institutional arrangements; it also has a psychological effect on the participants, ensuring that there is a continuing interrelationship between the working of

> institutions and the psychological qualities and attitudes of individuals interacting within them.
>
> (Pateman 1970, p. 22)

Rousseau is thus interested in the question of how social order affects the structure of human personality – in his view, participatory institutions are necessarily *educative*, with the term 'education' used in the widest sense to mean positive human development. According to Pateman (1970), Rousseau presents two other arguments in defence of participatory processes. One of these is that participation is seen by Rousseau as increasing people's sense of freedom to become (and remain) their own masters. Self-realisation is thus an important element in Rousseau's thought. The other argument Rousseau presents suggests that participation has an integrative function: that it increases the feeling among individuals that they 'belong' to their community; the participatory experience attaches individuals to their social lives and is instrumental in developing it into a true community.

Marxist thinking on community parallels in many ways that of Rousseau. Within existing capitalists societies, Marx (1959) argues, community is illusory, in that people do not meet as primary social beings whose needs and interests demand mutual co-operation and solidarity; rather, they meet as isolated, alienated individuals in the market, all seeking to maximise their own utilitarian purposes, separated from communities, pursuing individual interests and wholly preoccupied in their social isolation. In contrast, Marx claims, community can be achieved only after the transformation of society, a necessary condition of which is the development of the class consciousness of the proletariat. For Marx, a transformed, liberated democratic community is one in which the structure of domination is broken and human interaction is not characterised by exploitative relationships between individuals in the market. Marx, like Rousseau before him, is thus highly critical of economic and political inequalities, and sees emancipation in the evolution of a human community in which social relationships are characterised by reciprocal aid, fraternity and solidarity.

According to Marx, the hierarchical division of labour is not only in itself an impediment to the full development of each individual, but is also the source from which arise the major social classes, which establish still more limitations on human freedom. Marx's vision of the future thus includes transcendence over those structures of society which not only produce but also reproduce unequal power relationships. For Marx, abolition of the division of labour means rejuvenation of a radical view of democratic community which accepts the importance of the unalienated, organic and direct social relationships associated with Tönnies's *Gemeinschaft*, but rejects Tönnies's backward-looking emphasis on hierarchy and the inequality of status. The Marxian community is then a new, secular and non-hierarchical *Gemeinschaft*, in which 'all persons will once more be part of an organic community that elevates the common life and absorbs individuals fully within it' (Kamenka 1982, p. 16).

During this century, no one has promoted democratic communitarian ideals more vigorously than Dewey, an extract from whose *Philosophy of Education* (1958) is appended to this monograph. Dewey's justification of the democratic community as a social ideal is in terms of his view of human nature. Like Rousseau, he considers human beings in very optimistic terms. Humans are, for Dewey, intrinsically social beings–they crave democratic participation. He insists that to withhold this participation from them is to treat them as objects. Dewey regards this as both psychologically damaging and morally wrong. It is psychologically damaging because anti-democratic practices ensure that individuals' diverse capacities are not fully developed, and it is morally wrong because individuals are not entitled to treat other individuals as means to their ends. Dewey argues that the communitarian ideal and the foundation of democracy rest on a certain

> faith in the capacities of human nature; faith in human intelligence and in the power of pooled and cooperative experience. It is not belief that these things are complete but that, if given a show, they will grow and be able to generate progressively the knowledge and wisdom needed to guide collective action. Every autocratic and authoritarian scheme of social action rests on a belief that the needed intelligence is confined to a superior few, who because of inherent natural gifts are endowed with the ability and the right to control the conduct of others; laying down principles and rules and directing the ways in which they are carried out. It would be foolish to deny that much can be said for this point of view. It is that which controlled human relations in social groups for much the greater part of human history. The democratic faith has emerged very, very recently in the history of mankind. Even where democracies now exist, men's minds and feelings are still permeated with ideas about leadership imposed from above, ideas that developed in the long early history of mankind. After democratic political institutions were nominally established, beliefs and ways of looking at life and of acting that originated when men and

> women were externally controlled and subjected to arbitrary power, persisted in the family, the church, business, and the school; and experience shows that as long as they persist there, political democracy is not secure.
>
> (Dewey 1958, pp. 59–60)

The project of delivering to schools a democratic community characterised by equality and reciprocity in social relationships implies that the traditional view of administrative leadership is fundamentally misguided. This is so for a number of reasons. The first of these concerns the nature and scope of social relationships that are possible in an environment in which leaders are set apart structurally from their followers. Taylor (1982) insists that in democratic communities, relations should be both *direct* and many sided. Neither of these conditions can be achieved in an organisation governed by the requirements of bureaucratic rationality. In a hierarchical organisation, relations are necessarily one sided: the leader delegates responsibilities, the subordinates are held accountable to the leader. Nor are relations between leaders and followers *direct*, for, in a bureaucracy, they are necessarily mediated by role definitions, duty statements, and the like, which have been negotiated in some cases but simply dictated in others. It might be argued that, in many schools, individual principals (the leaders) are in fact able to relate to the teachers and parents (the followers), in a manner that is both direct and many sided. This may very well be true in some instances, but it does not detract from the point that bureaucratic rationality demands one-sided and mediated relationships between administrative leaders and followers.

In practice, the notion of administrative leadership implies that the expectations of the principal's role are often reified. This makes reciprocal exchanges between principals and others very difficult, if not impossible. The reification of the role of the principal as a leader means that principals are thought to be effective only when they are seen to be 'in charge', 'in control of the situation'. Theoretically, there is little room in this conception of the social relationships in a place like a school for mutual aid and other reciprocal forms of exchange, conducted on assumptions of equality. Administrative leadership often means manipulation and control of subordinates, and certainly not any educative desire for the members of a group to learn from each other (see Gronn 1984).

The democratic view of community implies that there should be a *substantial* degree of equality among members of a community, be it a school community or a community of any other kind, for without equality there can be no reciprocity in social relationships. Within a community, there should be equality, both in the sense that all members of a group ought to have, as far as is possible, an equal influence upon those decisions which affect important aspects of the life of that group, and in the sense that inequalities of organisational rank and access to knowledge should not be so considerable as to result in permanent subordination of some members to others in any of the various aspects of social life, or to create great inequalities in the actual exercise of political rights.

The democratic view of community suggests an obliteration of the distinction between leaders and followers that is institutionally and structurally defined for administrative purposes. But can organisations such as schools function effectively without hierarchical designation of positions and roles? How realistic is it to expect *all* individuals to be involved in organisational decision making? Can the mass of people really bear the strain of playing public roles? In short, is organisational self-government possible? How plausible is organisational democracy? This century has seen the presentation of many arguments that object to the premises upon which the democratic view of community is based. In what follows some of these arguments are examined.

The possibility of democratisation

The most widely known of all arguments against the democratic view of community is presented by the Italian sociologist, Michels, in his *Political Parties* which was first published in 1915. Michels's method of investigation is rigidly empirical and involves the testing of a hypothesis which he believes governs all social organisations. In his hypothesis Michels addresses himself to the organisational imperatives inherent in modern industrial society by testing what he refers to as the 'iron law of oligarchy'. He examines a whole range of social organisations which have sincerely aspired to democratic communitarian goals, but finds that even these cannot escape the iron law of oligarchy. The law, simply put, asserts that in any organisation of any size hierarchical leadership is necessary for its survival and success. The nature of organisations, Michels argues, is such that it gives power and advantage to a group of leaders who cannot then be checked or held accountable by their followers. Michels (1968, pp. 365-6) insists that 'the formation of oligarchies within the various forms of democracy is the outcome of organic necessity, and consequently affects every organization, be it socialist or even anarchist'. He maintains, moreover, that

> the majority of human beings, in condition of eternal tutelage, are predestined by tragic necessity to submit to the dominion of a small minority, and must be content to constitute the pedestal of an oligarchy.
>
> (Michels quoted in Kariel 1970, pp. 33–4)

So, according to Michels and his followers, leadership in organisations is an empirically inescapable necessity. For Michels, there are two sets of factors which cause this necessity – organisational factors and psychological factors.

Michels argues that the explanation of the oligarchical phenomenon is partly psychological; that is, oligarchy derives from the psychological characteristics of the human personalities of both the leaders and the followers. Leaders, according to Michels, are psychologically predisposed to consolidate their political power. Power, once acquired by individuals, naturally leads them to ensure that it is preserved. In the course of organisational behaviour leaders are psychologically so transformed that they view others in unspontaneous and calculated ways. Oligarchy is also reinforced, in Michels's view, by the psychic transformation of the followers. Michels maintains that, while democratic community theorists often assume a high degree of political interest and spontaneity on the part of all individuals, in fact most people are apathetic towards public matters. Most people are concerned with organisational decision making only in so far as it affects their personal interests. They have no interest in how decision making takes place, and it is thus only a small group who constitute the active membership of any organisation. Michels believes, moreover, that most people lack technical competence, which is associated with public decision making. With this feeling of incompetence, they are only too happy to let others make decisions. Michels insists that the majority in fact fear participation. He concludes that such people have a psychological need for guidance (Michels 1968, Part 1B, ch.2). Majority apathy, submissiveness, lack of expertise and deference all combine, therefore, to provide ideal conditions for the few, the elite, with the interest, knowledge and organisational ability, to lead.

Beyond the psychological factors, Michels claims, there are organisational and structural forces towards oligarchy. This aspect of Michels's argument turns on the complexity of modern large-scale organisations. He argues that the size and complexity of modern organisations is such that technical expertise is required if the organisational goals are to be attained. Michels insists that the attempts to involve all members in organisational decision making must, by necessity, involve amateurism and confusion that is totally self-defeating. Organisations, to be effective, need to establish a co-ordinated policy line and administrative structure to ensure consistency and efficiency. This alleged logic of organisations therefore requires expertise which the majority of members of a group may not have the aptitude to develop and for which they certainly lack the interest and time. Mass participation in organisations thus conflicts with the principles of professional and technical administration.

The themes central to Michels's thesis have been reinforced by the work of a whole range of recent political scientists. Schumpeter (1950), Dahl and Lindblom (1963), Verba (1961) and Lasswell (1958) have all argued against the empirical possibility of implementing a radical program of democratising organisations. They have argued that to operate efficiently modern organisations require expertise in decision-making skills which only a few can develop. The development of specialism and professionalism, moreover, has a self-perpetuating effect. The professionals come to have a personal interest in maintaining the status quo because it is only then that their professional expertise can continue to be operative. This claim to professional expertise means that non-professionally engaged members of organisations become increasingly isolated from the decision-making processes.

Recently an Australian writer, Higley (1980), has argued that our society and social organisations must inevitably be governed by an elite and, even, that a certain type of elite is necessary to safeguard representative democracy as it currently exists. He maintains that any attempt to create a more equal and participatory democratic society will not only inevitably fail but also lead to social discord and political chaos. This would mean that democracy as we now have it will become thoroughly insecure and unstable. Pateman (1982, p. 97) has suggested that elitist claims such as the one presented by Higley stand on two related assertions: firstly, that in complex societies like ours social organisations must necessarily be hierarchical and undemocratic and, secondly, that individuals are always, because of their inherent human nature, self-interested and apathetic with respect to public issues. Let us now briefly examine some of the arguments presented above.

The argument against the democratic conception of community is based on supposedly objective empirical evidence about the nature of modern social organisations and human motivation. It is argued that the participatory democratic ideal simply does not square with existing political realities, since it can be shown that all previous attempts at bringing the less visible and audible parts of organisations into the decision-making arena have failed. This charge can be met by pointing out that, even if this empirical generalisation is true, *it does not follow* that the achievement of the democratic community is in principle impossible. It is simply fallacious to suppose that empirical evidence concerning contemporary democratic practices can be taken as a refutation of the ideals of participatory democracy. As Duncan and Lukes (1983) argue, to suggest that reference to empirical realities refutes the normative case for greater participation in decision making is to commit a 'category mistake'. They point out that classical advocates of participatory democracy were perfectly well aware of the difficulties of translating their normative goals into reality. Rousseau, for example, was not concerned with 'men as they are' but 'laws as they might be'; that is, with human potentialities for political action. Duncan and Lukes (1983) maintain that it is still viable to argue in favour of a framework for a freer and more moral society than has existed hitherto. The fact that contemporary organisations have failed to advance democratic goals does not, therefore, in itself demonstrate that they are inherently incapable of achievement.

Hierarchical and elitist practices are, moreover, inevitable only under certain empirical conditions, which no doubt currently exist in a society dominated by bureaucratic rationality. But the conditions themselves are far from inevitable. Thus the 'iron law' of oligarchy or indeed the 'inner logic' of bureaucratic organisations need not be regarded as inescapable. It is only under certain structural conditions that the bureaucratic form of social existence presents itself as natural and necessary – there is no reason to suppose that under different conditions human conduct may not be ordered differently. Human beings have options, and it is the norms that they subscribe to, more than some given external social reality, that determine which options they exercise. Social reality itself is a historical condition. Gouldner (1970) challenges the so-called 'realist' political scientists in the following terms:

> Instead of telling men how bureaucracy might be mitigated, they insist that it is inevitable. Instead of explaining how democratic patterns may, to some extent, be fortified and extended, they warn us that democracy cannot be perfect. Instead of controlling disease, they suggest that we are deluded, or more politely, incurably romantic, for hoping to control it. Instead of assuming responsibilities as realistic clinicians, striving to further

> democratic potentialities whenever they can, many social scientists have become morticians, all too eager to bury men's hopes.
>
> (Gouldner 1970, p. 126)

The critics of the participatory democratic community see the need for hierarchical leadership because they find widespread apathy and disinterest in public affairs. It is argued that most people are socially and politically apathetic and do not wish to be involved or to participate. They wish to be left, in Voltaire's phrase, to cultivate their own gardens. There does appear to be widespread apathy in contemporary society, but we need to be cautious about how we interpret this evidence; and ask what causes political apathy. Apathy and general disinterest should not be seen as something intrinsic to human nature. In liberal, individualist societies, where privatisation is encouraged above all other virtues, self-interest would inevitably prevail. Pateman (1982, pp. 98–9) has correctly observed that in a society 'where commercialisation and commodification has reached the point that . . . almost everything can be offered for sale in the hope of profit, it is not surprising that it is so widely believed that self-interest is the key to social order'. Pateman, moreover, rejects the view that *all* individuals are self-interested and argues that women as a group have always been held 'naturally' to act from love, altruism and self-sacrifice.

In examining the causes of apathy, we should take heed of the observations made by Walker (1966). He argues that

> political apathy obviously has many sources. It may stem from feelings of personal inadequacy, from the fear of endangering important personal relationships, or from a lack of interest in the issues; but it may also have its roots in the society's institutional structure, in the weakness or absence of group stimulation or support, in the positive opposition of elements within the political system to wider participation; in the absence, in other words, of appropriate spurs to action, or the presence of tangible deterrents.
>
> (Walker 1966, p. 290)

Apathy is thus not an intrinsic feature of human life; it is something conditioned by an over-organised and paternalistic society. Human beings can be politically engaged only in an organisation in which they are encouraged to be political. Evidence of apathy is clearly an index of the extent to which contemporary society has fallen short of the democratic ideal, but this evidence cannot be taken as proof of its impracticality. As Plant (1974, p. 71) has pointed out, it is *because* social and political structures in contemporary society have become so unresponsive to the wishes of ordinary people and have become so large, remote and bureaucratic that such widespread apathy prevails. The response to this evidence of apathy should lie, argues Bachrach (1967, p. 33), not so much in being realistic and accepting the alleged facts about human nature and its poorly formed social motivation, but more in developing human potential by making institutions more participatory and democratic. This should be seen as an educational objective.

Yet another argument often put forward as a criticism of the democratic community is that such communitarian decision making is necessarily inefficient. It is asserted that widespread participation in organisational decision making, while perhaps possible, is cumbersome, confusing, and therefore inefficient. Efficiency is possible only when there are clear lines of authority and chains of command. This argument could be challenged on empirical grounds. Indeed, it could plausibly be argued that in organisations in which worker consultation and participation is widespread efficiency is improved simply because workers are clearer about organisational goals and ethos and, moreover, have a feeling of commitment to the decisions which have been collectively made.

The efficiency argument can also be challenged on normative grounds (see Rizvi 1986). To begin with, the notion of efficiency is hard to pin down, as we saw earlier. The economistic conception of efficiency is just one of many possible definitions. But, importantly, efficiency is a value which is central only to the modern organisational ethos. This point is brought out most clearly by Kariel (1967) who argues that even if we accept that there might be some loss of efficiency if participatory structures were extended, we cannot conclude that democracy is not worth pursuing. He correctly maintains that we must not assume efficiency to be a fundamental value, and that on occasions it may be necessary to choose between efficiency and other human goals, such as liberty or 'self-development'. The notion of 'cost' of participation must, he insists, be broadened to include cost to the good life for the individual as well as economic costs.

There have been other arguments, of course, but these have ranged from the relatively trivial to the misleading. Some of these arguments are examined in the appended article by Goodman (1971), who, in my view, has succeeded in presenting entirely convincing counter-arguments.

Experiments in organisational democracy

These counter-arguments clearly show that democratisation of social organisation is not a logical impossibility, and that hierarchy and bureaucracy only appear as a technical necessity under a certain conception of rationality which implies a certain way of viewing the social world. It has been argued, moreover, that democratisation of social organisations is not only possible but also highly desirable, especially in a political climate where Western institutions are increasingly coming apart at the seams. However, it has to be admitted that, while it is possible to mount a strong philosophical case for organisational democracy and defend it from possible objections, it is more difficult to envisage how democracy might actually work in schools, and how one might proceed towards greater democracy and away from hierarchical organisational arrangements.

Given the alternative view of rationality suggested in this monograph, it can be said straight away that there are no formulas, general rules or neatly packaged models for bringing about democracy in schools. Each organisation and each school is unique in some respect and it is for this reason that the rationalist linear model of educational change is totally inappropriate. Each situation has to be examined in the context of its own unique historical and social features. Moreover, changes can come about only when the individuals who belong to a particular school can see the point in changing and can begin to employ a mode of comprehension which is not dominated by the problems and concerns of bureaucratic rationality. Now, while it is not possible to provide general comprehensive alternative models to hierarchy and bureaucracy, it is nevertheless useful to examine the attempts which have been made, in a variety of settings around the world, to democratise schools and other types of organisations. Such an examination can not only provide useful pointers but also exposes concrete problems and poses questions which must be addressed. In what follows there is space enough only to mention and briefly discuss just a few of these experiments in organisational democracy.

The kibbutz movement in Israel has been in existence for more than half a century. It has always been profoundly committed to egalitarian and communal values. A kibbutz school is basically organised within the framework of a community of families governed by a general assembly based on the democratic principle of one member, one vote, which is exercised through a weekly community meeting. A kibbutz is owned by its members. It cannot be sold and its assets cannot be divided by its members. This means that economic considerations become less significant in social relationships. And, because a kibbutz operates as an amalgam of industries, agricultural branches, cultural networks and educational institutions, there is a greater possibility of social cohesion and a sense of mutual obligation within the group. The education of children within the kibbutz is a shared communal responsibility. Whyte and Blasi point out that their research into a whole variety of kibbutzim reveals that

> people who work together meet together to discuss community affairs, serve on educational committees that oversee their children's schools, participate in community cultural events, and together elect community economic and social officials and decide community policy.
>
> (Whyte & Blasi 1984, p. 397)

Kibbutzim thus attempt to maximise participation, but this means that expertise and authority is not relied upon. However, the degrees of authority and the areas of expertise most appropriate for different participatory institutions are clearly delineated and regularly reviewed. Those people assigned tasks requiring expertise are therefore held directly accountable to the community as a whole.

Of course, the Israeli experience is not directly translatable to Australian situations. For one thing, kibbutzim are homogeneous communities in which all the individuals are committed to, and therefore have a collective interest in, a certain religious ideology. Australia is a pluralistic society with a tradition of politics between competing interest groups. It is worth noting, moreover, that only three per cent of Israelis belong to kibbutzim, the rest preferring to live in arrangements which are, in essence, little different from their Australian counterparts.

In recent years, the Israeli government has moved 'to co-ordinate and rationalise' regional kibbutzim, with the expressed aim of providing them with many services and opportunities which are not available to small communities at present (Rayman 1984). The government has also attempted to link the productive efforts of kibbutzim to the broader context of national policies which have sought to expand military bureaucracy and increase world markets. Rayman (1984, p. 406) argues that these developments have, to a large extent, undermined some of the original communitarian goals of the kibbutzim movement. The egalitarian democratic ideology has, Rayman claims, come under increasing pressure as Israel, as a developing industrial nation, has attempted to bring 'efficiency' to its organisations.

While there are considerable problems with the further development of the kibbutzim movement, the lessons which can be learned from it are also instructive. It is clear that no sooner are the efforts of democratic organisation captured by state interests and state bureaucracies than communitarian goals become subverted. The size of the organisation is also important. On the basis of Israeli experience, the possibility of bringing *direct* participatory democracy to larger organisations appears limited. This point is made convincingly by Halsey (1983) in his examination of the way schools function in Yugoslavia.

To be sure, the Yugoslavian state does impose certain regulations and constraints regarding taxes, structures and procedures for governance, and it also establishes certain educational requirements for everyone, but, beyond this, schools in Yugoslavia work as self-governing institutions. School communities–teachers, parents, students and other members of the community–govern themselves. Halsey (1983) points out that schools in Yugoslavia are 'socially owned', and that the adversarial relationships between teachers and parents which characterise British schools seem to be absent in Yugoslavian schools. Watson (1985, p. 15) claims that schools in Yugoslavia are organised as 'self-managed communities of interest'. Self-managed communities of interests are associations formed by working people directly or through self-managed organisations and communities to satisfy common needs. Watson argues that the purpose of self-managed communities of interest is 'to form a bond between workers, the commune, and schools in order to facilitate personal development, educational development and economic growth' (Watson 1985, p. 15).

Most decisions in Yugoslavian schools are made by workers' councils which, in many cases, comprise the whole staff. Principals and other positions of responsibility are elected by the whole community of interest, and jobs are rotated so that not only is the workers' commitment to the egalitarian ideology strengthened but also the workers begin to develop confidence in their own ability to function in a co-operative. An important educational consequence of self-management in schools is that students begin to learn about democracy by seeing it work at first hand and by participating in student councils themselves. As Watson (1985, p. 26) points out: 'The expectation is that all students will end up working in self-managed enterprises, and therefore they should have experienced and learned about the concept of self-management'.

Any impression that Yugoslavian schools organised on democratic lines always work in the way hoped for would be misleading, for there are considerable problems, both of logistics and of widespread commitment. Halsey (1983) observes that it is only in the smaller communities in Yugoslavia that direct democracy appears to be working in the way envisaged. As institutions expand in size and function, self-management becomes more difficult because in practice it is impossible to consult every worker about every policy. There then arises a need to build representative democracy into direct participatory democracy. But, Halsey (1983, p. 197) argues, if hierarchies are unavoidable then mechanisms can be devised 'to make them the servants rather than the masters of the workers in the enterprise'. The Yugoslavs, according to Halsey, have long been addressing themselves to the problem of devising appropriate mechanisms, but this has proved to be an extremely difficult task.

Of course, even in Yugoslavian schools the problem of unequal distribution of power in organisations remains. Even those committed to participatory democracy are often reluctant to give up power once they have managed to achieve it. As Boyd (1984, p. 18) asks, why should the administrators with their powerful interests 'shoot themselves in their own foot'? Lindblom (1977, p. 337) has observed that in Yugoslavia, as elsewhere, managers and administrators often use their own technical knowledge to 'reduce the workers' councils to rubber stamps'. While there are other researchers (for example, Spinrad 1984) who have shown Lindblom's analysis to be exaggerated, there does appear to be some agreement that in the larger organisations in Yugoslavia participatory democracy often becomes 'managed participation'. How it is possible to achieve genuine democracy, a democracy in which there is equality of power relations, remains one of the most perplexing questions facing those who are committed to the social ideal of democratising communities and organisations.

However, to claim that there are problems in achieving complete democracy is not to suggest that it is an ideal not worth pursuing. Indeed, the recognition of the problems inherent in democratising organisations should enable us to be much better equipped to detect those situations in which the currently powerful seek to subvert democratic participation by obscuring communitarian and emancipatory interests. Recognition of the problems should also provide us with the challenge of devising modes of administrative practice which make the flaunting of democratic ideals so transparent as to make that possibility less likely. As Dewey (1958) has argued, yet another challenge, for educators especially, is to prepare students for democracy in such a way as to provide them with the critical skills required to express for themselves the sources of domination and oppression.

Australia generally, but Victoria in particular, is at a crucial stage in the development of its educational institutions. The Australian government, through its Participation and Equity Program (PEP) (Commonwealth Schools Commission 1985) and other initiatives, has provided school communities with the opportunity to examine systematically their practices in an effort to increase democratic participation at all levels of decision making. Successive governments in Victoria, for whatever motives, have attempted to devolve more power to local communities. Schools are now encouraged to develop, within certain very broad statewide guidelines, their own policies in respect to curriculum, teaching/learning style and school organisation. Most secondary schools in Victoria now have representative administrative committees to make decisions which were previously the sole prerogative of the principals.

It cannot be denied that there has been some small measure of success in democratising schools in Victoria, but these achievements have been, at best, limited. In view of the argument presented in this monograph, at least two reasons can be put forward for this. One is that there has been a failure to develop a 'responsive bureaucracy', a promise so lavishly made in the Ministerial Papers (Education Department of Victoria 1983). For example, the personnel and finance branches of the Victorian Education Department remain as centralised as ever. Centralised structures created for administrative convenience and hierarchical control are necessarily going to be barriers to democratic participation (see Rizvi 1984). The second reason for the disappointing progress made towards devolution in Victoria concerns the persistence of bureaucratic rationality.

Educational discourse, at all levels of decision making, remains dominated by technical administrative matters, divorced from values and cultural concerns. Emphases on accountability, compliance with industrial agreements, the formation of committees and written administrative procedures continue to play a dominant role in our thinking. It is not suggested that these things are not important, but when these issues become ends in themselves bureaucratic rationality reasserts itself.

Despite this note of pessimism, it should be said that Victoria is in a unique situation in that its official government rhetoric, at least, continues to celebrate the values of democratic decision making. This provides local communities with the opportunity to take up the government on its rhetoric and to demand changes to its bureaucratic structure and change schools in such a way as to make it extremely difficult for any future government to impose measures which promote further centralisation and greater bureaucratisation, and the invidious, hierarchical social relationships that go with them.

Conclusion

This monograph has examined the notion of *administrative* leadership, as it has been presented in the traditional literature of educational administration. It has been argued that the idea of administrative leadership is rooted in a mode of thinking identified in this monograph as 'bureaucratic rationality'. Given the world-view of bureaucratic rationality, institutional hierarchy–and therefore administrative leadership–manifests itself as a technical necessity, as a rational requirement for the efficient accomplishment of organisational goals. This analysis implies that the notions of administrative leadership and democratic community are fundamentally incompatible. If we continue to accept the values represented by the traditional concept of administrative leadership, then we cannot hope to achieve democratic educational administration and to transform schools into democratic communities–goals which have, at least rhetorically, been pursued in recent years in Australian education. We are thus confronted with the difficult task of making a moral and political decision between either accepting the values of democracy and communitarianism, and thus abandoning the notion of administrative leadership, or continuing to organise schools in bureaucratic and hierarchical ways, laying great emphasis on institutionalised forms of leadership and social relationships.

Strong moral and epistemological grounds have been presented in this monograph for rejecting the idea of administrative leadership. It has been argued that there is nothing necessarily rational about the idea of administrative leadership, and that it is a historical construct which has functioned as an ideological device for maintaining and legitimating the status quo. Organisational democracy has been presented as not only highly desirable but also perfectly plausible, though institutional difficulties in democratising social organisations such as schools have to be recognised. These difficulties, however, are not insurmountable.

The current political climate in Australian education provides educators with a unique opportunity to take up governments and bureaucracies on their rhetoric and to begin to put into practice the principles of democratic and collaborative decision making. Such practice necessarily requires us to abandon the traditional notion of administrative leadership and to begin to think about the nature and place of leadership in democratic institutions in radically new ways. It may be that some kind of leadership is inevitable, even in the most democratic of all organisations, but that form of leadership would have to differ greatly from the view of leadership which is informed by bureaucratic rationality. It would have to arise differently, exercise its power differently and involve a radically different type of social relationship with the members of its community.

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Readings

READING 1

Democracy and educational administration

J. Dewey

SOURCE

J. Dewey, *Philosophy of Education (Problems of Men)*, Littlefield, Adams, Totowa, NJ, 1958, pp. 57-69.

I

MY EXPERIENCE IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION IS LIMITED. I should not venture to address a body of those widely experienced and continuously engaged in school administration about the details of the management of schools. But the topic suggested to me has to do with the relation of school administration to democratic ideals and methods and to the general subject of the relation of education and democracy, to which I have given considerable thought over many years. The topic suggested concerns a special phase of this general subject. I shall begin, then, with some remarks on the broad theme of democratic aims and methods. Much of what I shall say on this subject is necessarily old and familiar. But it seems necessary to rehearse some old ideas in order to have a criterion for dealing with the special subject.

In the first place, democracy is much broader than a special political form, a method of conducting government, of making laws and carrying on governmental administration by means of popular suffrage and elected officers. It is that, of course. But it is something broader and deeper than that. The political and governmental phase of democracy is a means, the best means so far found, for realizing ends that lie in the wide domain of human relationships and the development of human personality. It is, as we often say, though perhaps without appreciating all that is involved in the saying, a way of life, social and individual. The keynote of democracy as a way of life may be expressed, it seems to me, as the necessity for the participation of every mature human being in formation of the values that regulate the living of men together: which is necessary from the standpoint of both the general social welfare and the full development of human beings as individuals.

Universal suffrage, recurring elections, responsibility of those who are in political power to the voters, and the other factors of democratic government are means that have been found expedient for realizing democracy as the truly human way of living. They are not a final end and a final value. They are to be judged on the basis of their contribution to end. It is a form of idolatry to erect means into the end which they serve. Democratic political forms are simply the best means that human wit has devised up to a special time in history. But they rest back upon the idea that no man or limited set of men is wise enough or good enough to rule others without their consent; the positive meaning of this statement is that all those who are affected by social institutions must have a share in producing and managing them. The two facts that each one is influenced in what he does and enjoys and in what he becomes by the institutions under which he lives, and that therefore he shall have, in a democracy, a voice in shaping them, are the passive and active sides of the same fact.

The development of political democracy came about through substitution of the method of mutual consultation and voluntary agreement for the method of subordination of the many to the few enforced from above. Social arrangements which involve fixed subordination are maintained by coercion. The coercion need not be physical. There have existed, for short periods, benevolent despotisms. But coercion of some sort there has been; perhaps economic, certainly psychological and moral. The very fact of exclusion from participation is a subtle form of suppression. It gives individuals no opportunity to reflect and decide upon what is good for them. Others who are supposed to be wiser and who in any case have more power decide the question for them and also decide the methods and means by which subjects may arrive at the enjoyment of what is good for them. This form of coercion and suppression is more subtle and more effective than is overt intimidation and restraint. When it is habitual and embodied in social institutions, it seems the normal and natural state of affairs. The mass usually become unaware that they have a claim to a development of their own powers. Their experience is so restricted that they are not conscious of restriction. It is part of the democratic conception that they as individuals are not the only sufferers, but that the whole social body is deprived of the potential resources that should be at its service. The individuals of the submerged mass may not be very wise. But there is one thing they are wiser about than anybody else can be, and that is where the shoe pinches, the troubles they suffer from.

The foundation of democracy is faith in the capacities of human nature; faith in human intelligence and in the power of pooled and cooperative experience. It is not belief that these things are complete but that, if given a show, they will grow and be able to generate progressively the knowledge and wisdom needed to guide collective action. Every autocratic and authoritarian scheme of social action rests on a belief that the needed intelligence is confined to a superior few, who because of inherent natural gifts are endowed with the ability and the right to control the conduct of others; laying down principles and rules and directing the ways in which they are carried out. It would be foolish to deny that much can be said for this point of view. It is that which controlled human relations in social groups for much the greater part of human history. The democratic faith has emerged very, very recently in the history of mankind. Even where democracies now exist, men's minds and feelings are still permeated with ideas about leadership imposed from above, ideas that developed in the long early history of mankind. After democratic political institutions were nominally established, beliefs and ways of looking at life and of acting that originated when men and women were externally controlled and subjected to arbitrary power, persisted in the family, the church, business, and the school; and experience shows that as long as they persist there, political democracy is not secure.

Belief in equality is an element of the democratic credo. It is not, however, belief in equality of natural endowments. Those who proclaimed the idea of equality did not suppose they were enunciating a psychological doctrine, but a legal and political one. All individuals are entitled to equality of treatment by law and in its administration. Each one is affected equally in quality if not in quantity by the institutions under which he lives and has an equal right to express his judgment, although the weight of his judgment may not be equal in amount when it enters into the pooled result to that of others. In short, each one is equally an individual and entitled to equal opportunity of development of his own capacities, be they large or small in range. Moreover, each has needs of his own, as significant to him as those of others are to them. The very fact of natural and psychological inequality is all the more reason for establishment by law of equality of opportunity, since otherwise the former becomes a means of oppression of the less gifted.

While what we call intelligence be distributed in unequal amounts, it is the democratic faith that it is sufficiently general so that each individual has something to contribute, whose value can be assessed only as it enters into the final pooled intelligence constituted by the contributions of all. Every authoritarian scheme, on the contrary, assumes that its value may be assessed by some *prior* principle, if not of family and birth or race and color or possession of material wealth, then by the position and rank a person occupies in the existing social scheme. The democratic faith in equality is the faith that each individual shall have the chance and opportunity to contribute whatever he is capable of contributing and that the value of his contribution be decided by its place and function in the organized total of similar contributions, not on the basis of prior status of any kind whatever.

I have emphasized in what precedes the importance of the effective release of intelligence in connection with personal experience in the democratic way of living. I have done so purposely because democracy is so often and so naturally associated in our minds with freedom of *action*, forgetting the importance of freed intelligence which is necessary to direct and to warrant freedom of action. Unless freedom of individual action has intelligence and informed conviction back of it, its manifestation is almost sure to result in confusion and disorder. The democratic idea of freedom is not the right of each individual to *do* as he pleases, even if it be qualified by adding "provided he does not interfere with the same freedom on the part of others." While the idea is not always, not often enough, expressed in words, the basic freedom is that of freedom of *mind* and of whatever degree of freedom of action and experience is necessary to produce freedom of intelligence. The modes of freedom guaranteed in the Bill of Rights are all of this nature: Freedom of belief and conscience, of expression of opinion, of assembly for discussion and conference, of the press as an organ of communication. They are guaranteed because without them individuals are not free to develop and society is deprived of what they might contribute.

What, it may be asked, have these things to do with school administration? There is some kind of government, of control, wherever affairs that concern a number of persons who act together are engaged in. It is a superficial view that holds government is located in Washington and Albany. There is government in the family, in business, in the church, in every social group. There are regulations, due to custom if not to enactment, that settle how individuals in a group act in connection with one another.

It is a disputed question of theory and practice just how far a democratic political government should go in control of the conditions of action within special groups. At the present time, for example, there are those who think the federal and state governments leave too much freedom of independent action to industrial and financial groups, and there are others who think the government is going altogether too far at the present time. I do not need to discuss this phase of the problem, much less to try to settle it. But it must be pointed out that if the methods of regulation and administration in vogue in the conduct of secondary social groups are non-democratic, whether directly or indirectly, or both, there is bound to be an unfavorable reaction back into the habits of feeling, thought and action of citizenship in the broadest sense of that word. The way in which any organized social interest is controlled necessarily plays an important part in forming the dispositions and tastes, the attitudes, interests, purposes and desires, of those engaged in carrying on the activities of the group. For illustration, I do not need to do more than point to the moral, emotional and intellectual effect upon both employers and laborers of the existing industrial system. Just what the effects specifically are is a matter about which we know very little. But I suppose that everyone who reflects upon the subject admits that it is impossible that the ways in which activities are carried on for the greater part of the waking hours of the day, and the way in which the shares of individuals are involved in the management of affairs in such a matter as gaining a livelihood and attaining material and social security, can only be a highly important factor in shaping personal dispositions; in short, forming character and intelligence.

In the broad and final sense all institutions are educational in the sense that they operate to form the attitudes, dispositions, abilities and disabilities that constitute a concrete personality. The principle applies with special force to the school. For it is the main business of the family and the school to influence directly the formation and growth of attitudes and dispositions, emotional, intellectual and moral. Whether this educative process is carried on in a predominantly democratic or non-democratic way becomes, therefore, a question of transcendent importance not only for education itself but for its final effect upon all the interests and activities of a society that is committed to the democratic way of life. Hence, if the general tenor of what I have said about the democratic ideal and method is anywhere near the truth, it must be said that the democratic principle requires that every teacher should have some regular and organic way in which he can, directly or through representatives democratically chosen, participate in the formation of the controlling aims, methods and materials of the school of which he is a part. Something over thirty years ago, I wrote: "If there is a single public-school system in the United States where there is official and constitutional provision made for submitting questions of methods of discipline and teaching, and the questions of the curriculum, text-books, etc., to the discussion and decision of those actually engaged in the work of teaching, that fact has escaped my notice." I could not make that statement today. There has been in some places a great advance in the democratic direction. As I noted in my earlier article there were always in actual fact school systems where the practice was much better than the theory of external control from above: for even if there were no authorized regular way in which the intelligence and experience of the teaching corps was consulted and utilized, administrative officers accomplished that end in informal ways. We may hope this extension of democratic methods has not only endured but has expanded. Nevertheless, the issue of authoritarian versus democratic methods in administration remains with us and demands serious recognition.

It is my impression that even up to the present democratic methods of dealing with pupils have made more progress than have similar methods of dealing with members of the teaching staff of the classroom. At all events, there has been an organized and vital movement in the first matter while that in the second is still in its early stage. All schools that pride themselves upon being up-to-date utilize methods of instruction that draw upon and utilize the life-experience of students and strive to individualize treatment of pupils. Whatever reasons hold for adopting this course with respect to the young certainly more strongly hold for teachers, since the latter are more mature and have more experience. Hence the question is in place: What are the ways by which can be secured more organic participation of teachers in the formation of the educational policies of the school?

Since, as I have already said, it is the problem I wish to present rather than to lay down the express ways in which it is to be solved, I might stop at this point. But there are certain corollaries which clarify the meaning of the issue. Absence of participation tends to produce lack of interest and concern on the part of those shut out. The result is a corresponding lack of effective responsibility. Automatically and unconsciously, if not consciously, the feeling develops, "This is none of our affair; it is the business of those at the top; let that particular set of Georges do what needs to be done." The countries in which autocratic government prevails are just those in which there is least public spirit and the greatest indifference to matters of general as distinct from personal concern. Can we expect a different kind of psychology to actuate teachers? Where there is little power, there is correspondingly little sense of positive responsibility. It is enough to do what one is told to do sufficiently well to escape flagrant unfavorable notice. About larger matters, a spirit of passivity is engendered. In some cases, indifference passes into evasion of duties when not directly under the eye of a supervisor; in other cases, a carping, rebellious spirit is engendered. A sort of game is instituted between teacher and supervisor like that which went on in the old-fashioned schools between teacher and pupil. Other teachers pass on, perhaps unconsciously, what they feel to be arbitrary treatment received by them to their pupils.

The argument that teachers are not prepared to assume the responsibility of participation deserves attention, with its accompanying belief that natural selection has operated to put those best prepared to carry the load in the positions of authority. Whatever the truth in this contention, it still is also true that incapacity to assume the responsibilities involved in having a voice in shaping policies is bred and increased by conditions in which that responsibility is denied. I suppose there has never been an autocrat, big or little, who did not justify his conduct on the ground of the unfitness of his subjects to take part in government. I would not compare administrators to political autocrats. On the whole, what exists in the schools is more a matter of habit and custom than it is of any deliberate autocracy. But, as was said earlier, habitual exclusion has the effect of reducing a sense of responsibility for what is done and its consequences. What the argument for democracy implies is that the best way to produce initiative and constructive power is to exercise it. Power, as well as interest, comes by use and practice. Moreover, the argument from incapacity proves too much. If it is so great as to be a permanent bar, then teachers cannot be expected to have the intelligence and skill that are necessary to execute the directions given them. The delicate and difficult task of developing character and good judgment in the young needs every stimulus and inspiration possible. It is impossible that the work should not be better done when teachers have that understanding of what they are doing that comes from having shared in forming its guiding ideas.

Classroom teachers are those who are in continuous direct contact with those taught. The position of administrators is at best indirect by comparison. If there is any work in the world that requires the conservation of what is good in experience so that it may become an integral part of further experience, it is that of teaching. I often wonder how much waste there is in the traditional system. There is some loss even at the best of the potential capital acquired by successful teachers. It does not get freely transmitted to other teachers who might profit by it. Is not the waste very considerably increased when teachers are not called upon to communicate their successful methods and results in a form in which it could have organic effect upon general school policies? Add to this waste that results when teachers are called upon to give effect in the classroom to courses of study they do not understand the reasons for, and the total loss mounts up so that it is a fair estimate that the absence of democratic methods is the greatest single cause of educational waste.

The present subject is one of peculiar importance at the present time. The fundamental beliefs and practices of democracy are now challenged as they never have been before. In some nations they are more than challenged. They are ruthlessly and systematically destroyed. Everywhere there are waves of criticism and doubt as to whether democracy can meet pressing problems of order and security. The causes for the destruction of political democracy in countries where it was nominally established are complex. But of one thing I think we may be sure. Wherever it has fallen it was too exclusively political in nature. It had not become part of the bone and blood of the people in daily conduct of its life. Democratic forms were limited to Parliament, elections and combats between parties. What is happening proves conclusively, I think, that unless democratic habits of thought and action are part of the fiber of a people, political democracy is insecure. It cannot stand in isolation. It must be buttressed by the presence of democratic methods in all social relationships. The relations that exist in educational institutions are second only in importance in this respect to those which exist in industry and business, perhaps not even to them.

I recur then to the idea that the particular question discussed is one phase of a wide and deep problem. I can think of nothing so important in this country at present as a rethinking of the whole problem of democracy and its implications. Neither the rethinking nor the action it should produce can be brought into being in a day or year. The democratic idea itself demands that the thinking and activity proceed cooperatively. My utmost hope will be fulfilled if anything I have said plays any part, however small, in promoting cooperative inquiry and experimentation in this field of democratic administration of our schools.

II

The general question of educational administration makes appropriate a consideration of the problems of public school administration in this country and of the ways of meeting them. It is not necessary to insist upon the fact that the problems are complex and difficult. They present at least three phases, each of which in turn is composed of obscure and conflicting factors.

There is, first, what may be called the intellectual-professional problem. Superintendents, principals, supervisors, etc., are engaged in the direction of an *educational* enterprise. It may seem superfluous to italicize the word "educational." But I do so in order to suggest what is meant by the intellectual phase of the responsibility and function of the administrator. He—or she—not only participates in the development of minds and character, but participates in a way that imposes special intellectual responsibilities. Indeed, the sense of responsibility for distinctively intellectual leadership may take a form that defeats its own purpose. It may take the form of laying out, in a good deal of detail, the whole scheme of the curriculum and promulgating methods to be followed. Even when the idea is not carried to this extent, there are too few cases in which the teaching corps takes an active and cooperative share in developing the plan of education.

In the second place, administrators are particularly charged with problems arising from personal relations. Anyone who has faced the task of helping to maintain harmonious and effective personal relations in family life can imagine the difficulties that emerge in connection with a large teaching staff made up of persons of different temperaments, who have had different training, and are possessed of different outlooks on life. But the problems that arise in connection with these personal relationships are only a part of those which an administrator has to face. He has to maintain cooperative relations with members of a school board; to deal with taxpayers and politicians; to meet parents of varied views and ideals. Moreover, the problems of personal adjustment that offer themselves are often conflicting, because of the opposed demands of different groups. A superintendent is an intermediary between the teaching staff and the members of the public. He is compelled to face two ways, and is fortunate if he can escape the tendency towards a divided personality. At least, there are some administrators who are "diplomatic" and even subservient in one relation and arbitrary and authoritative in the other.

In the third place, the administrator by the nature of his calling has a large amount of detail and routine to which he must attend. There is always the danger that he will become so immersed in this phase of his work that the other two phases of his activity are submerged. Especially in large systems is the danger acute. Large systems work almost automatically toward isolation of the administrator. Business and other details are so pressing that connection with the intellectual and moral problems of education is had only at arms' length. Impersonal matters take the place of personal relations, and are always mechanical. The tendency in this direction is increased because the powerful influence of business standards and methods in the community affects the members of an educational system, and then teachers are regarded after the model of employees in a factory.

The reason I have mentioned these rather obvious things is because they indicate, to my mind, that an administrator can deal effectively with these various problems only as he is able to unify them all in some comprehensive idea and plan. If he parcels them out and tries to deal with them separately he is lost. Especially is it important that his conception of the directly educational phase of his work be unified with his conception of the social relations of administration, both inside and outside the school.

The different aspects of the administrator's work tend in fact to cut across each other in such ways as to nullify their proper effect. The only way for the administrator to avoid this dispersion is to have a definite idea of the place and function of the school in the ongoing processes of society, local and national. Only from a definite point of view, firmly and courageously adhered to in practice, can the needed integration be attained.

The first step in this integration is a clear and intelligent decision upon a basic issue. Is it the social function of the school to perpetuate existing conditions or to take part in their transformation? One decision will make the administrator a timeserver. He will make it his business to conform to the pressures exercised by school boards, by politicians allied with heavy taxpayers, and by parents. If he decides for the other alternative, many of his tasks will be harder, but in that way alone can he serve the cause of education. For this cause is one of development, focussing indeed in the growth of students, but to be conceived even in this connection as a part of the larger development of society.

In the second place, in the degree to which the administrator achieves the integration of the educational phase of his work with the human and social relations into which he necessarily enters, he will treat the school itself as a cooperative community. His leadership will be that of intellectual stimulation and direction, through give-and-take with others, not that of an aloof official imposing, authoritatively, educational ends and methods. He will be on the lookout for ways to give others intellectual and moral responsibilities, not just for ways of setting their tasks for them.

In the third place, the administrator will conceive adult education to be a necessary part of his job, not in the sense of providing adult classes and lectures—helpful as these may be—but in the sense that only as the public is brought to understand the needs and possibilities of the creative education of the young, can such education be vitally effective. He will realize that public education is essentially education *of* the public: directly, through teachers and students in the school; indirectly, through communicating to others his own ideals and standards, inspiring others with the enthusiasm of himself and his staff for the function of intelligence and character in the transformation of society.

READING 2

The **case** for **decentralization**

P. Goodman

SOURCE

P. Goodman, 'The case for decentralization', in P. Bachrach (ed.), *Political Elites in a Democracy*, Atherton Press, New York, 1971, pp. 116-37.

Throughout society, the centralizing style of organization has been pushed so far as to become ineffectual, economically wasteful, humanly stultifying, and ruinous to democracy. There are overcentralized systems in industry, in government, in culture, and in agriculture. The tight interlocking of these systems has created a situation in which modest, direct, and independent action has become extremely difficult in every field. The only remedy is a strong admixture of decentralism. The problem is where, how much, and how to go about it.

Let me give some rough definitions. In a centralized enterprise, the function to be performed is the goal of the organization rather than of persons (except as they identify with the organization). The persons are personnel. Authority is top-down. Information is gathered from below in the field and is processed to be usable by those above; decisions are made in headquarters; and policy, schedule, and standard procedure are transmitted downward by chain of command. The enterprise as a whole is divided into departments of operation to which are assigned personnel with distinct roles, to give standard performance. This is the system in Mr. Goldwater's department store, in the Federal government and in the State governments, in General Motors and in the UAW, in the New York public schools and in many universities, in most hospitals, in neighborhood renewal, in network broadcasting and the Associated Press, and in the deals that chain-grocers make with farmers. The system was devised to discipline armies; to keep records, collect taxes, and perform bureaucratic functions; and for certain kinds of mass production. It has now become pervasive.

The principle of decentralism is that people are engaged in a function and the organization is how they cooperate. Authority is delegated away from the top as much as possible and there are many accommodating centers of policy-making and decision. Information is conveyed and discussed in face-to-face contacts between field and headquarters. Each person becomes increasingly aware of the whole operation and works at it in his own way according to his capacities. Groups arrange their own schedules. Historically, this system of voluntary association has yielded most of the values of civilization, but it is thought to be entirely unworkable under modern conditions and the very sound of it is strange.

I

Now if, lecturing at a college, I happen to mention that some function of society which is highly centralized could be much decentralized without loss of efficiency, or perhaps with a gain in efficiency, at once the students want to talk about nothing else. This insistence of theirs used to surprise me, and I tested it experimentally by slipping in a decentralist remark during lectures on entirely different subjects. The students unerringly latched on to the remark. In their questions, for twenty minutes they might pursue the main theme—e.g., nuclear pacifism or even the sexual revolution—but they returned to decentralization for many hours, attacking me with skepticism, hot objections, or hard puzzlers.

From their tone, it is clear that in this subject something is at stake for their existence. They feel trapped in the present system of society that allows them so little say or initiative, and that indeed is like the schooling that they have been enduring for twelve to sixteen years. The querulousness and biting sarcasm mean that, if decentralization *is* possible, they have become needlessly resigned; they hotly defend the second best that they have opted for instead. But the serious and hard questions are asked with a tone of skeptical wistfulness that *I* will be able to resolve all difficulties. If I confess at some point that I don't know the answer, at once students invent answers for me, to prove that decentralization *is* possible after all.

Naturally, at each college we go over much the same ground. The very sameness of the discussions is disheartening evidence that the centralist style exists as a mass-superstition, never before questioned in the students' minds. If I point to some commonplace defect of any centralized system, or one which leaps to the eye in the organization of their own college, I am regarded as a daring sage. No other method of organization was conceived as possible. . . .

II

Decentralization is not lack of order or planning, but a kind of coordination that relies on different motives from top-down direction, standard rules, and extrinsic rewards like salary and status to provide integration and cohesiveness. It is not "anarchy." (But of course, most Anarchists, like the anarcho-syndicalists or the community-anarchists, have not been "anarchists" either, but decentralists.)

As an example of decentralist coordination, the Anarchist Prince Kropotkin, who was a geographer, used to point spectacularly to the history of Western science from the heroic age of Vesalius, Copernicus, and Galileo to his own time of Pasteur, Kelvin, and J. J. Thomson. The progress of science in all fields was exquisitely coordinated. There were voluntary associations, publications, regional and international conferences. The Ph.D. system was devised to disseminate new research to several hundred university libraries. There was continual private correspondence, even across warring boundaries. Yet in this vast common enterprise, so amazingly productive, there was no central direction whatever.

The chief bond of cohesion was, of course, that all scientists had the common aim of exploring Nature, as well as their personal idiosyncrasies and their personal and clique rivalries. The delicate integration of effort occurred because they followed the new data or worked with the frontier theories. It was almost uniquely rare, so far as we know (the case of Mendel is famous), that important work dropped out of the dialogue.

In the past forty years, the organization of science has begun to rely heavily on central Institutes and Foundations, to choose areas of research, to select personnel, to grant funds. National governments have become the chief sponsors and, in a sense, directors of research. It is possible that, on balance, this mode of organization might produce better results. It is efficient in that there are, literally, more "scientists" and there is a proliferation of research products. Without doubt some methods, like population surveys, and some apparatus, like atom smashers and moon rockets, require a lot of capital and central organization. It has been argued that when knowledge accumulates beyond a certain point, its dissemination must be centrally directed and further research must be systematically directed.

Yet it is not self-evident that this style is superior to the private industriousness, lonely thought, shoestring apparatus of Pasteur, Edison, and Einstein or the master-disciple relations of Thomson, Rutherford, etc. Proof is difficult either way, for if the best brains are working in one style we cannot tell what they would be doing if working in another style. Even in technology and in the modern, centralized climate, as Ben Seligman has pointed out, "Since 1900, about half of the important inventions affecting consumer goods have come from independent researchers. Air-conditioning, automatic transmissions, cellophane, jet engines, and quick-freeze came from old-fashioned inventors or small companies."

The ideal test would be to try out both styles, but in fact the big central style eventually drives out the other, by nonscientific pressures. It buys up persons, dictates to the universities by grants for research and development, piles administrative and consultant duties on keen minds that would otherwise be working in philosophical seclusion or in real teaching. Some of the disadvantages are obvious. With the best will in the world, when so much capital and organization are invested there is a tendency toward immediate profits and military power, and there appears—astoundingly, in the history of Western science—commercial and political secrecy as a condition of research. Under authoritative direction, and with extrinsic rewards, a vast amount of "research" has been mere busywork. The pursuit of the goals of the organization, in "crash" programs, whether in medicine, strategy, or space exploration, necessarily has a different principle of order than the wandering dialogue of intellect with the unknown nature of things.

III

Over the centuries, not only scientific truth but most other objective values, like beauty or compassion, have thrived by voluntary association and independent solitude. (Theological salvation is perhaps the only spiritual good that has usually been centrally regulated.) Almost by definition, the progress of social justice has been by voluntary association, since the central authority is what is rebelled against. And, of course, to preserve liberty, the American political system was deliberately designed as a polarity of centralist and decentralist elements, with limitations on the power of the Sovereign and inbuilt checks and balances at every level.

But we must also remember that in its heyday, celebrated by Adam Smith, the free-enterprise system of partnerships and vigilant joint stockholders was in theory a model of decentralist coordination, as opposed to the centralized system of mercantilism, royal patents, and monopolies that it replaced. It reposed an absolute reliance on self-interest, voluntary association, and the cohesive influence of natural forces: Economic Man and the Laws of the Market. Pretty soon, however, the stockholders stopped attending to business and became absentee investors or even gamblers on the stock exchange. And almost from the beginning in this country, notably in the bank and the tariff, there was a revival of state monopolies.

IV

"How can you decentralize air-traffic control?" asks a student.

You can't. There are many functions that are central by their natures, and it is useful to enumerate some of the chief kinds.

Central authority is necessary where there are no district limits and something positive must be done, as in epidemic control or smog control; or when an arbitrary decision is required and there is no time for reflection, as in traffic control; or when we have to set arbitrary standards for a whole field, but the particular standard is indifferent, e.g., weights and measures or money.

Centralization is temporarily necessary when an emergency requires the concentration of all powers in a concerted effort. But history has shown that such emergency centralization can be fateful, for the central organization tends to outlive the emergency, and then its very existence creates a chronic emergency; people soon become helpless unless they are told what to do.

Central authority is convenient to perform routine or "merely" administrative functions, when people have more important things to do. This is the Marxist theory of the withering away of the State of "mere" administration. But this too can be fateful, for administration soon encroaches on every function. It is thus that the executive secretary of an organization ends up running the show.

Central organization is the most rational kind when the logistics of a situation outweigh consideration of the concrete particulars involved. These are all the cases of ticketing and tax collecting, where one person is like another. (E.g., a train ticket is technically a contract, but it would be absurd to negotiate each ticket individually.) In my opinion, the same holds for the mass production and distribution of any standard item that is good enough and that everybody needs.

Besides, there are monopolies that must be regulated and licensed by central authority (or nationalized), since by definition they cannot be countervailed. Some monopolies are natural or become so by circumstances, like urban water supply. Some enterprises become monopolistic because they are so heavily capitalized that competition is prohibitively risky or wasteful. They grow until they become the inevitable nature of things, and then must be so regulated. For instance, the railroads of Europe were decentrally planned and constructed, with voluntary agreement on gauges and schedules; but eventually, as monopolies, they have been nationalized and partly internationalized.

My bias is decentralist, yet in some functions I think we need more centralization than we have. For instance, there ought to be uniform modular standards in building materials and fixture. Building is a typical example of how we do things backwards. Where there ought to be decentralization, for instance in the design which requires artistry and in the decision of each neighborhood on how it wants to live, we get bureaucratic routine design, national policy, the standards of absentee sociologists, and the profits of promoters. But where there could be important savings, in materials and the process of construction, we do not standardize. Similarly, there ought to be standardization of machine parts and design, especially for domestic machinery and cars, to make repairs easier. And it is certainly absurd for the expensive enterprise of space exploration to be internationally competitive, instead of centrally planned and departmentalized with crews and honors shared.

Finally, automatic and computer technology is by nature highly centralizing, in its style and in its applications. This is a massive phenomenon of the present and immediate future and we shall recur to it continually. In general, the point of view of this book is that, where it is relevant, this technology should be maximized as quickly as possible and many such plants should be regulated as monopolies. But perhaps the profoundest problem that faces modern society is to decide *in what functions the automatic and computer style is not relevant, and there to curtail it or forget it.*

Thus, it is reasonable to use business machines in a branch-library system to expedite finding and exchanging books among the branches. But in my opinion, it is more dubious to select the books centrally and by computer, according to standards of excellence, consensus of the national reviews, etc.; for selection is a chief means of education and avenue of self-expression for each branch-librarian, and local attention is indispensable for the specific cultivation of each neighborhood. And in the children's section, even routine checking in and out provides unembarrassed occasions for conversation between the librarian and the children.

V

A Marxist student objects that blurring the division of labor, local option, face-to-face communication, and other decentralist positions are relics of a peasant ideology, provincial and illiberal.

There is something in this. In fact, there have always been two strands to decentralist thinking. Some authors, e.g., Lao-tse or Tolstoy, make a conservative peasant critique of centralized court and town as inorganic, verbal, and ritualistic. But other authors, e.g., Proudhon or Kropotkin, make a democratic urban critique of centralized bureaucracy and power, including feudal industrial power, as exploiting, inefficient, and discouraging to initiative. In our present era of State socialism, corporate feudalism, regimented schooling, brainwashing mass communications, and urban anomie, both kinds of critique make sense. We need to revive both peasant self-reliance and the democratic power of professional and technical guilds and workers' councils.

Any decentralization that could occur at present would inevitably be post-urban and post-centralist; it could not be provincial. There is no American who has not been formed by national TV and no region that has not been homogenized by the roads and chain stores. A model of twentieth-century decentralization is the Israeli *kibbutz*. Some would say that these voluntary communities are fanatical, but no one would deny that they are cosmopolitan and rationalistic, post-centralist and post-urban.

Decentralizing has its risks. Suppose that the school system of a Northern city were radically decentralized, given over to the control of the parents and teachers of each school. Without doubt some of the schools would be Birchite and some would be badly neglected. Yet it is hard to imagine that many schools could be worse than the present least-common-denominator. There would certainly be more experimentation. There would be meaningful other choices to move to. And inevitably all the schools would exist in a framework of general standards that they would have to measure up to or suffer the consequences.

Invariably, some student argues that without the intervention of the Federal government, the Negroes in the South will not get their civil rights. This may or may not be so, but certainly most of their progress toward civil rights so far has come from local action that has embarrassed and put pressure on Washington. By the same token the Negro organizations themselves have been decentrally coordinated; as Dr. King has pointed out, the "leadership" is continually following the localities. But the basic error of this student is to think that the "States' Rights" of the segregationists is decentralist. (As authentic regionalism *would* be decentralist.) If each locality indeed had its option, the counties where Negroes are in the majority would have very different rules! And they would provide a meaningful choice for other Negroes to move to.

VI

The relation of decentralization to physical and social mobility is an important topic; let us stay with it for another page. As the example of science has shown, it is possible to have decentralist community without territorial community. Yet decentralist philosophies have prized stability, "rootedness," subtle awareness of the environment, as a means to the integration of the domestic, technical, economic, political, and cultural functions of life and to provide a physical community in which the young can grow up.

The Americans have always been quick to form voluntary associations—Tocqueville mentions the trait with admiration; yet Americans have always been mobile—usually going *away*, individual and families leaving communities that did not offer opportunity, in order to try new territory known by hearsay. Historically, the country was open at the margins, because of either the geographical frontier or new jobs that attracted immigrants. When people settled, they again formed voluntary associations. Thus, to a degree, voluntary mobility favored decentralization. On the other hand, the new ties and settlements inevitably tended to become more homogeneous and national, the result of any uprooting.

At present, however, the country is closed at the margins, yet the physical (and social) mobility is even greater. Negroes migrate north because the sharecropping has failed and they are barred from the factories; Northern middle-class whites move to the suburbs to escape the Negroes; farm families have dwindled to 8 per cent. Unfortunately, none of these groups is moving *to* anything. And much moving is ordered by the central organization itself: national corporations send their employees and families to this or that branch; universities raid one another for staff; promoters and bureaucrats dislocate tenants for urban redevelopment.

Under such conditions people must end up in total anomie, with no meaningful relation to the environment and society. There seem to be two alternative remedies. One was proposed forty years ago by Le Corbusier: to centralize and homogenize completely, so that one dwelling place is exactly like another, with identical furniture, services, and surroundings. When all live in identical hotel rooms, mobility does not involve much dislocation. The other alternative is to build communities where meaningful voluntary association is again possible; that is, to decentralize. This has, of course, been the wistful aim of suburbanism, and it continually appears in the real-estate advertisements. But a suburb is not a decentralist community; its purposes, way of life, and decisions are determined by business headquarters, the national standard of living, and the bureau of highways. The hope of community is in people deciding important matters for themselves.

VII

A student raises a related objection: Decentralism is for small towns; it cannot work with big, dense populations. But I don't think this objection has any merit. Decentralism is a kind of social organization; it does not involve geographical isolation, but a particular sociological use of geography.

In important respects, a city of five million can be decentrally organized as many scores of unique communities in the framework of a busy metropolis.

Usually in modern urban administration, the various municipal functions—school, job induction, social work, health, police and court for misdemeanors, post office, housing and rent control, election district, etc.—are divided into units only for the administrative convenience of City Hall. The districts do not coincide with one another or with neighborhoods. A citizen with business or complaint must seek out the district office of each department, or perhaps go to City Hall. And correspondingly, there is no possible forum to discuss the coordination of the various functions except at the very top, with the Mayor or before the City Council.

Decentralist organization would rather follow the actuality of living in an urban community, where housing, schooling, shopping, policing, social services, politics are integrally related. Each neighborhood should have a local City Hall. Such *arrondissements* could have considerable autonomy within the municipal administration that controls transit, sanitation, museums, etc., whatever is necessarily or conveniently centralized. Taxes could be collected centrally and much of the take divided among the neighborhoods to be budgeted locally.

For the average citizen, the convergence of all kinds of related business in one local center is not only convenient but must lead to more acquaintance and involvement. Poor people especially do not know their way around, are stymied by forms to fill out, and have no professional help; they are defeated by fighting City Hall and soon give up. Besides, each neighborhood has interlocking problems peculiar to itself. These can be reasonably confronted by citizens and local officials, but they are lost in the inner politics of central bureaucracies that have quite different axes to grind.

For instance, a neighborhood so constituted might learn to decide on its own redevelopment. In programs for urban renewal, the Federal government follows the traditional formula of balancing centralism and decentralism and asks for approval of plans by the local community. Cities therefore set up local "planning boards." But this works out as follows. Occasionally, middle-class residential neighborhoods can organize themselves to prevent any change whatever; poor people are entirely passive to the powers-that-be; most usually, the boards are rubber stamps for City Hall and promoters. The say of a neighborhood in its destiny can be meaningful only if the neighborhood has begun to be conscious of itself as a community. For this, mere "consent" or "participation" is not enough; there must be a measure of real initiating and deciding, grounded in acquaintance and trust.

However, the question is not whether decentralization can work in dense urban populations, but how to make it work, for it is imperative. The increase of urban social disease and urban mental disease is fundamentally due to powerlessness, resignation, and withdrawal, as if people's only way to assert vitality is to develop symptoms. The central authorities try to cope as stern or hygienic caretakers; the citizens respond by becoming "community-dependent"—in jail, in the hospital, on relief; that is, they become chronic patients. With many, this has gone on for two and three generations.

VIII

Yet something further needs to be said about big, dense populations. In my opinion, there is a limit of urban density and urban sprawl beyond which *no* form of social organization, centralist or decentralist, can cope. Urban crowding creates a peculiar climate of both too many social relations and a kind of sensory and emotional deprivation. Instead of contact and communication, there is noise and withdrawal. It is no different from John Calhoun's overcrowded rodents who become confused and die. It is as if the circuits are clogged. Similarly, Harrison Matthews has shown that many mammals who in the wild are peaceful, become hostile in the "urban conditions" of a zoo, where there is not enough "social space" to experiment with their territoriality and hierarchy. Another naturalist, Loren Eiseley, says, "The higher the human population mounts, the more humanity in its behavior resembles the jostlings of the molecules of a gas under confined circumstances. It is not out of such confinement that a truly human future can be assured." For instance, the density of population in Central Harlem, at 67,000 per square mile, is nearly three times that of New York City as a whole. Even apart from the other unfavorable conditions of the Negroes, such crowding itself is pathological, overstimulating yet culturally impoverishing, destructive of solitude, excessively and brutally policed.

Our degree of urbanization is beyond reason. In this country we have the symptoms of a "population explosion" at the same time that vast and beautiful rural regions have become depopulated. . . . In the present setup, only big operators with migrant labor can make a go of farming, and the farm subsidies work disproportionately in favor of this group. Except for a few earnest but powerless voices, there is a general agreement to let farming-as-a-way-of-life die out. Yet no effort whatever is made to find urban substitutes for the independence, multifarious skill, community spirit, and extended family that were rural values.

During the Great Depression, the Roosevelt Administration made some efforts to support subsistence farming, as a factor of social stability and to relieve both rural and urban misery. But with the return of Prosperity, nothing further came of it. (We shall refer again to the shaggy decentralism of parts of the early New Deal. . . .)

IX

A student hotly objects that decentralism is humanly unrealistic, it "puts too much faith in human nature" by relying on intrinsic motives, like interest in the job and voluntary association. Another student mentions Rousseau, who is still academically out of fashion since his debunking by Professor Babbitt a generation ago. (Jefferson, too, is now getting his lumps.)

This objection is remarkably off-base. My experience is that most decentralists are crotchety and skeptical and tend rather to follow Aristotle than Rousseau. We must avoid concentration of power precisely because we *are* fallible; *quis custodiet custodes?* Democracy, Aristotle says, is to be preferred because it is the "least evil" form of government, since it divides power among many. I think the student states the moral issue upside down. The moral question is not whether men are "good enough" for a type of social organization but whether the type of organization is useful to develop the potentialities of intelligence, grace, and freedom in men.

More deeply, the distrust of "human nature," of course, is anxious conformism. One must save face, not make a mistake in any detail; so one clings to an assigned role. But, unfortunately, the bigger the organization, the more face to save. For instance, we shall see that the government Peace Corps is many times as expensive as similar less official operations largely because an errant twenty-year-old well-digger might become an International Incident, so one cannot be too careful in selecting him. Convenience of supervision overrides performance. And the more "objective" the better. If the punch card approves, no one is guilty. To bureaucrats, a fatal hallmark of decentralist enterprises is their variety in procedure and persons; how can one *know,* with a percentage validity, that these methods and persons are *right?*

Morally, all styles of social organization are self-proving, for people understand the rightness of what everybody in fact does. But different styles have different norms. The centralizing style makes for both petty conforming and admiration for bigness. The more routine and powerless people are, the more they are mesmerized by extrinsic proofs of production and power. An enterprise that is designed on a small scale for a particular need of particular people comes to be regarded as though it were nothing at all. To win attention and support, it must call itself a Pilot Project, promising mighty applications.

Nevertheless, still deeper than these neurotic confusions, there is, in my opinion, an authentic confusion in the face of unprecedented conditions of modern times that makes for rigidity and fear of social experiment. A student says, "We could afford to experiment if it were not for the Chinese, the Cubans, the crime rate, the unemployment, the space race, the population explosion." The leap in technology, the galloping urbanization, nuclear weapons, the breakdown of the colonial system—all involve threats and dilemmas. The inevitable response of people is to rally to the style of strict control by experts. In emergencies, centralized organization seems to make sense and often does make sense. It is also comfortingly dictatorial.

X

Finally, the moral objection is stated also the opposite way: decentralizing is impossible, not because people are incapable but because the powers-that-be won't allow it. (This student is an Angry Young Man.) Granting that in some areas decentralization is workable, how could it possibly be brought about? We cannot expect central powers to delegate autonomy any more than we can expect the nation-states to give up any of their sovereignty and grandeur. Indeed, the tendency is entirely in the other direction, toward bigger corporations, combinations, and tie-ins, toward tighter scheduling and grading in education, toward increased standardization and the application of automatic and computer technology in every field, and of course toward the increase of power in Washington to become the greatest landlord, the greatest sponsor of research, and the greatest policeman.

Yes. But there are forces also in the opposite direction.

I must assume, for instance, that it is not a social accident that I, as an author, am writing this book.

In principle, there are two ways in which an overcentralized system can become more mixed. Voluntary associations form spontaneously because of pressing needs to which the central system is irrelevant or antipathetic. Or the central authority itself chooses, or is forced, to build in decentral parts because its method is simply not working.

There is a marked trend toward spontaneous associations that indicates first a despair of, and then an indifference to, the regular methods. One must "do it oneself." We have already noticed the spontaneity, localism, and decentralist federation of the Negro civil rights movement, as different from the more conventional maneuvering of the Urban League and the older NAACP. But this is part of a general spread of para-legal demonstrating, boycotting, and show of power that express dissent with formal procedures that are not effective. The great discovery has been nonviolent activism, and this is peculiarly epidemic, for it immediately provides something to do rather than merely being balked—a beautiful feature of it, often, is to balk the authorities who have been balking us; yet it does not require forming political parties or organizing private armies. (When nonviolence is morally authentic, indeed, its very action is decentralizing: it restores the opposition to being persons rather than personnel. Violence has the contrary effect, of welding people into rigid organizations.)

Do-It-Yourself can be para-institutional if not overtly paralegal. Beat youth withdraws from the economy and tries to contrive a community culture of its own. Off-Broadway first withdraws from Broadway, dissident artists first withdraw from the big commercial galleries and set up their own galleries, etc.; but then there spreads a distaste for formal showings altogether. Students quit famous universities because they decide they are not being educated; then they form, for instance, the Northern Student Movement in order to tutor backward urban children; but then the Northern Student

Movement decides that the public school curriculum is inadequate, and the tutors will teach according to their own lights. Freedom Now sets up what amounts to a para-party in Mississippi.

And there is a similar tone even within the political framework. Contrasted with older "reform" movements which were devoted to purging the bosses and grafters, the new urban reform movements rapidly constitute themselves *ad hoc* for a concrete purpose other than getting hold of the party machinery, usually to block outrageous encroachments of government or big institutions. (Unfortunately, however, these reform "movements" usually do not have a counter-program; they stop with exercising a veto, lose steam, and eventually lose the original issue too. . . .

All this kind of ferment is what Arthur Waskow, of the Institute for Policy Studies, calls "creative disorder."

But also, as I shall spell out in the next chapter, the startling strength of know-nothing movements in the country is importantly due to justified dissatisfaction with the centralization, exactly as they claim when they reiterate the slogan, "Government must not do what people can do for themselves." By "people" our reactionary friends seem mainly to mean corporations, which are not people, yet I do not think that liberals and progressives pay attention to the underlying gripe, the loss of self-determination. The liberals glibly repeat that the complex problems of modern times do not allow simplistic solutions; no, they don't; but what is the use of "rational" solutions which finally are not the solutions of one's underlying problem?

XI

I do not notice any significant disposition of central powers to decentralize themselves. Rather, when the organization begins to creak, their disposition is to enlarge it further by adding new bureaus and overseers, to stall by appointing committees without power, to disregard difficulties and hope they will go away, or to call hard cases "deviant" and put them out of circulation.

Nevertheless, there are examples to show how decentralization *can* be built in.

The management of a giant corporation—General Motors is the classic example—can shrewdly decide to delegate a measure of autonomy to its corporate parts, because more flexible enterprising is more profitable in the long run. Similarly, a huge physical plant can be geographically dispersed, and the management somewhat decentralized, to save on labor costs and get better-tax breaks. In the Soviet Union, correspondingly, there is pressure for regional industrial councils, especially for allocating consumer goods. Naturally, these motives do nothing at all for the great majority of subordinates, though they multiply vice-presidents and local commissars.

More interesting for our purposes is the multifarious application of industrial psychology. For the most part, the pyschologists are decentralist by disposition and have taught a wisdom opposite to the time-motion studies of "scientific business management." Rather than subdividing the workman further and departmentalizing further, they have urged that it is efficient to allow more choice and leeway, to ask for suggestions from below, to increase "belonging." To give a typical example: In one plant it has been found more productive in the long run for half a dozen workmen to assemble a big lathe from beginning to end and have the satisfaction of seeing it carried away than to subdivide the operation on a line.

Needless to say, our industrial psychologists cannot pursue their instincts to the logical conclusion, workers' management. Yet questions of degree are *not* trivial. Consider the following example: In an area of England, it is traditional to work by a gang or collective contract. (This "Coventry system" has been studied by Professor Melman of Columbia.) A group of workmen agree to complete in a period a certain quantity of piecework, for which they are paid a sum of money divided equally. The capitalist provides the machinery and materials, but everything else—work rules, schedule, hiring—is left to group decision. The group may be half a dozen or a couple of thousand. Humanly, such an arrangement has extraordinary advantages. Men exchange jobs and acquire new skills; they adjust the schedule to their convenience or pleasures; they bring in and train apprentices; they invent labor-saving devices, which are to their own advantage; they cover for one another when sick or for special vacations.

Obviously such a system, so amazingly at variance with our minute top-down regulation, time-clock discipline, labor-union details, and competitive spirit, is hard to build into most of American industry. Yet where it would suit, it would make a profound difference. Where would it suit? How could it be tailored? How to get it put into effect?

Sometimes Federal or State agencies have to rely on decentralist organizations to make their own operations feasible. "Community developers" are sent in, e.g., by Mobilization for Youth; or just come in, like Saul Alinsky. State-aided housing involves developing Tenants' Councils to give the families a means of complaint against the sponsors and of petition to the State.

In the recent student disorders at Berkeley, there was a remarkable resurgence of initiative by the faculty, just to make communication again possible, for the Administration was obviously entirely out of touch. The faculty then sought to resume faculty control of student discipline, but as of this writing (December 1964) the Regents have refused this.

The occasional attempts at University reform, to alleviate the regimenting by the credits and grading machine, have been decentral structures like in-built honors colleges or the federation of small colleges instead of unlimited expansion. (But we have not yet come to the wisdom of breaking up the sixteen-year interlocked school system and offering alternative ways of growing up and different speeds for education.)

An attempt to build in decentralization has recently been occurring in the New York public school system. Because of a combination of near-riots in poor neighborhoods, some spectacular run-of-the-mill scandals, and the post-sputnik spotlight on upgrading, a new and pretty good Board was appointed. Deciding that the system is overcentralized, these gentlemen have resuscitated twenty-five local districts—averaging more than forty thousand children each!—and appointed local boards with rather indefinite powers to serve as liaison to the neighborhoods. But unlike the case of the Urban Renewal Planning Boards mentioned above, the intention has been to delegate positive powers; and, anyway, the remarkably strong-minded body of people who have been appointed to the local school boards have declined to be rubber stamps. For a couple of years now, there has been a jockeying for position and power. The local boards are empowered to hold budget hearings and "suggest" allocation of money. What does this mean? Could they "suggest" to eliminate some of the curriculum and services and substitute others? Some local board members want to decentralize radically, making the field superintendents (with their advisory boards) nearly autonomous within the big system, as is reasonable, since different neighborhoods have different conditions and must therefore have different curricula, staff, and service needs.

One of the Manhattan boards, curious to know what its sister boards were doing, convened a meeting of the five Manhattan boards, and they agreed to exchange minutes. At once central headquarters protested and forbade such attempts at federation. "If you issue joint statements," headquarters pointed out, "people will think that you speak for the school system." "What can you do about it?" asked the locals; "since you have called us into existence, we exist, and since we exist, we intend to act." I mention this incident not because it is important in itself, but because it is at the heart of the constitutional problem of centralization and decentralization.

These, then, are the chief *prima facie* objections raised by college students. Decentralization is disorderly and "anarchic." You cannot decentralize air-traffic control and public health. What about automation? Decentralization is a peasant ideology. It makes for "States' Rights" injustice. It is unworkable with big, dense populations. It implies an unrealistic faith that human nature is good and human beings are reasonable. It is impossible to go against the overwhelming trend toward bigness and power.

What is most discouraging in such discussions is that students keep referring to "your system" or "the decentralist system."

But I am not proposing a system. It is hard to convince college students that it is improbable that there *could* be a single appropriate style of organization or economy to fit all the functions of society, anymore than there could—or ought to be—a single mode of education, "going to school," that suits almost everybody, or anymore than there is a "normal" psychology that is healthy for almost everybody.

Rather, it seems to me as follows. We are in a period of excessive centralization. In this book I shall try to demonstrate that in many functions this style is economically inefficient, technologically unnecessary, and humanly damaging. Therefore we might adopt a political *maxim:* to decentralize where, how, and how much is expedient. But where, how, and how much are *empirical* questions. They require research and experiment.

In the existing overcentralized climate of opinion, it is just this research and experiment that we are not getting. Among all the departments, agencies, and commissions in Washington, I have not heard of one that deals with the organizational *style* of municipalities, social work, manufacturing, merchandising, or education in terms of technical and economic efficiency and effect on persons. Therefore, I urge students who are going on to graduate work to choose their theses in this field.

READING 3

Bureaucracy and **democracy**

D. F. Thompson

SOURCE
D. F. Thompson, 'Bureaucracy and democracy', in G. Duncan (ed.), *Democratic Theory and Practice*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983, pp. 235-50, 286-8.

Democracy does not suffer bureaucracy gladly. Many of the values we associate with democracy – equality, participation and individuality – stand sharply opposed to the hierarchy, specialization and impersonality we ascribe to modern bureaucracy. Yet for a long time political theorists did not see bureaucracy as a threat to democracy, and, I shall argue, democratic theorists still have not formulated a satisfactory response to the challenge bureaucratic power poses to democratic government.

One response to this challenge denies bureaucracy any place at all in a genuine democracy. Theorists who take this approach usually realize that they must show that bureaucracy does not inevitably appear in every modern society, but only in those societies they consider nondemocratic. Thus, nineteenth-century writers often referred to bureaucracy as the 'Continental nuisance,' from which English democracy was immune.[1] Marx and other socialist writers agreed that France and Germany had the most highly developed bureaucracies, but they insisted that, as merely one manifestation of the bourgeois state, bureaucracy would disappear with the capitalism that gave rise to that state.[2] Yet socialist societies (admittedly not yet the democracies Marx had in mind) turned out to be more bureaucratic than the governments they replaced. Similarly, the belief that bureaucracy inheres in only socialist government could hardly be sustained once capitalist societies created the administrative structures necessary to maintain their large welfare states.

Still, from time to time, voices on both the left and the right revive the hope that bureaucracy might be abolished. Many have called for decentralization to eradicate bureaucracy. But smaller political jurisdictions develop petty bureaucracies of their own that usually are no more responsive than those of larger states. Other writers (and many politicians) insist that bureaucracy could be reduced if government simply did less. But even if government could do less, administrative power would simply shift to private bureaucracies, which may be more efficient but are hardly any more accessible to citizens.

No one has yet shown that the quality of life that citizens in modern democracies demand can be sustained without bureaucracy, or a form of organization very much like it. Weber's prognosis – that the further advance of bureaucracy is inevitable – has stood the test of time.[3] Rather than confining itself to certain kinds of societies, bureaucracy has become ubiquitous. Our century has witnessed 'the bureaucratization of the world'.[4]

The other response to the conflict between democracy and bureaucracy – and the one on which I concentrate in this essay – assumes, with Weber, that bureaucracy is here to stay. The 'great question,' Weber wrote, is 'what we can set against this mechanization to preserve a section of humanity from . . . this complete ascendancy of the bureaucratic ideal of life?'[5] Those who take this approach seek in various ways to tame bureaucracy through democratic controls. That these controls have proved insufficient has often been noticed.[6] But that this failure in the practice of democratic control might indicate the inadequacy of its theory has not been so often considered. I shall examine four models according to which theorists suppose that bureaucrats may be held responsible in a democracy. None of these models of administrative responsibility provides a proper place for bureaucracy in a democracy, I shall argue, because each misconceives or misapplies the idea of democratic responsibility. I shall also suggest that one of the models – one that stresses citizen participation – is less deficient than the others.

Democratic responsibility refers both to a process of deliberation (giving reasons for policies of government) and to a process of accountability (identifying the agents of those policies, and punishing or rewarding them). An adequate concept of democratic responsibility must include a wide range of reasons that officials may give for their decisions. It should not, for example, limit deliberation to only technical issues, but should promote discussion of the values underlying the policies officials pursue. An adequate concept must also provide a basis for identifying which officials actually make specific policies. The model should not, for example, confine accountability to formal lines of authority, but should call for identification of officials who actually influence particular decisions. The problem of responsibility is of course only one of the many problems that bureaucracy poses for democracy, but, as I hope will become clear, it is a fundamental one.

The first and still most influential idea of administrative responsibility – what I shall call the hierarchical model – arose at a time when the power of bureaucracy seemed negligible. Even as the scope of government grew and bureaucracies burgeoned, theorists could presume that administrators posed no threat to political leaders. They understood the role of bureaucrats much as Hobbes had explained the role of public ministers: they resemble 'the nerves and tendons that move the several limbs of a body natural'.[7] Because nerves and tendons of the body politic do not initiate anything on their own, political theory could safely ignore them. 'Of the ministerial and subordinate powers,' Locke comments, 'we need not speak' because they are all accountable to some other power in the commonwealth.[8] While the nerves and tendons might from time to time twitch on their own, none would show political will of its own. When democratic theorists later began to speak seriously of administration, they worried that politicians might constrain bureaucrats too much, not that bureaucrats would ever challenge their 'political masters'.[9]

It was Max Weber who turned the Hobbesian metaphor into a systematic theory of bureaucracy.[10] The hierarchical model that appears in his theory states, first, that administration follows 'fixed jurisdictional areas' and 'office hierarchy' in which there is 'a supervision of lower offices by the higher ones'. Secondly, it sharply distinguishes between administration and politics: administrators merely execute the policies set by politicians. Finally, the administrator and politician are subject to exactly the opposite principle of responsibility. The 'honor of the civil servant' consists in his executing the orders of his superiors, unlike the politician who must take 'personal responsibility' for his decisions. Although the model originally referred to a parliamentary form of government, it is compatible with a presidential form (and also with proposals for more presidential control or for more congressional control).

Empirical studies of modern bureaucracies present a picture of policymaking that departs drastically from the hierarchical model. In place of well defined jurisdictions and settled lines of authority, we find overlapping 'issue networks', with decisionmakers drawn from various agencies and various levels of government (and often also from outside government).[11] Instead of a clear distinction between politics and administration, we see bureaucrats exercising great discretion in defining the goals of policies, and bargaining with one another, politicians and citizens to win acceptance of these goals.[12] This discretion goes well beyond the traditional role of filling in the 'details' or the 'gaps' in legislation. It often involves mobilizing public support for or opposition to programs, determining priorities, choosing among possible beneficiaries, and evaluating the success or failure of programs.[13] Instead of standing at the end of the hierarchical chain, bureaucrats initiate a process in which they encourage citizens to ask their elected representatives to make certain policies, which bureaucrats then implement and finally assess.

Elected officials can, and do, review some of this political activity, especially controversial issues, but much of the public policy of the modern state results from the cumulative effect of many small, barely noticable decisions that middle- and low-level officials make.[14] It is true that bureaucratic decisions frequently anticipate what legislators want, but this is a distortion of the hierarchical model. Bureaucrats are responding neither to instructions of their superiors nor to the will of the legislature, but to the political clout of certain influential legislators, or members of their staffs.[15]

The discrepancies between the hierarchical model and actual bureaucratic behavior have been most clearly documented in American government but they appear in other industrial democracies too.[16] This is so even in Britain, where in the form of the doctrine of ministerial responsibility the model has probably come closer to realization than anywhere else.[17] As the size and complexity of administration have grown, so have the influence and the independence of British civil servants; it is estimated, for example, that only about two percent of all delegated rules are ever examined.[18] Few ministers hold a particular portfolio long enough to learn enough to master their departments. Neither are the lines of jurisdiction as clear as they once were. Civil servants formulate many policies and settle disputes as much in consultation with groups outside government as with other officials inside government.

That modern bureaucracies do not follow the hierarchical model as many democratic theorists hope, need not entail that we abandon the model as a normative standard or ideal. Weber himself recognized that bureaucrats could very well act independently, and were already beginning to dominate elected officials.[19] But this development discouraged neither him, nor a succession of other theorists, from insisting on the hierarchical model as the standard for judging the place of bureaucracy in a democracy.[20] In the most recent case for a return to the hierarchical model, Theodore Lowi proposes a package of reforms that would move American government toward what he calls juridical democracy – no delegation of legislative power without clear standards, more formal and explicit administrative rules, legal codification, and sunset laws.[21] Juridical democracy could promote democratic deliberation by discouraging the cosy clientelism that develops when bureaucrats deal mainly with the businessmen they are assigned to regulate, or even with the beneficiaries of the programs they are supposed to administer. It could also enhance democratic accountability, Lowi implies, by pushing political disputes to the highest levels of responsibility and thus subjecting them to greater public scrutiny.

Should the hierarchical model ever be realized, it may offer democracy these and other benefits. It may also create problems of its own. Even in the best circumstances in a complex society, the whole legislature or even its committees and subcommittees can hardly be expected to formulate all the specific provisions of law and oversee their execution. Much of this business would almost certainly fall to the staffs of legislative committees, those usually anonymous but already influential actors in legislative politics (particularly in the American Congress). The hierarchical model in this way could very well abolish administrative independence in the executive only to see it rise again in a legislative bureaucracy. As the experience of the growing power of legislative staffs suggests, the creation of a legislative bureaucracy would not represent an advance in democratic deliberation or accountability.

But the most pressing objection against the model turns not on the desirability of the system it proposes, but on the desirability of the process of change it encourages in present systems. That current practice departs from the model casts doubt on the use of the model, even as an ideal, to direct change in modern democracies. We should distinguish between the use of a model to recommend a state of affairs in the future, and its use to advocate criticism and reform under current conditions. A model that defines a perfectly acceptable ideal may not be the best guide to political practice under nonideal conditions. It may cause criticisms to miss their target, and it may urge reforms that though they approximate the ideal make the present system worse. Such consequences follow for democratic responsibility, I suggest, when we use the hierarchical model in conditions where it falls so far short of being realized.

Although the hierarchical model does not adequately represent bureaucratic practice in most democracies, it does shape political deliberation about administration. Its most general effect is to turn moral and political issues into technical and procedural ones. If bureaucrats simply implement the policies set by elected officials, the only serious criticism we can make of bureaucrats is that they fail to carry out their duties efficiently. The most common complaints about bureaucracies in fact center on the consequences of their inefficiency, such as the 'red tape' citizens encounter when they deal with government agencies.[22] Official inquiries also stress questions of efficiency. All of the major studies of the civil service that the British government has conducted since 1850 have concentrated almost wholly on matters of effective management and personnel policy.[23] As governments have turned over more and more economic planning and control to administrators, criticism and reform of this process have increasingly focused on technical questions of budgeting and forecasting. These techniques of course embody moral and political choices, but since bureaucrats are not supposed to make such choices, critics do not challenge the choices; they merely question the techniques.[24]

The hierarchical model also directs attention more to whether bureaucrats follow prescribed procedures than to whether they make proper substantive judgments. When the Special Counsel to the U.S. Energy Department in 1981 gave $4 million of government funds to four national charities, critics focused on the procedural propriety of his action, charging for example that he failed to clear his action with his superiors. The money had come from a government settlement with oil companies that had allegedly overcharged consumers for fuel. The specific consumers could not be identified, and the charities agreed to distribute the money to poor people for their fuel bills. Almost no one addressed the question of the criteria the government should apply in distributing funds of this kind, let alone the larger question of the role of government in the regulation of energy.

Similarly in Britain, the concern for procedure often predominates. Only great reverence for the hierarchical model could account for the preoccupation with the protocol of civil servants that often marks British political deliberation. The Select Committee on Parliamentary Questions in England in 1971 exhaustively examined the question, 'Should Ministers be permitted to ask civil servants to prepare questions for tabling by friendly MPs?' The Committee scarcely discussed the content of the questions, or how such a practice might affect the policies that civil servants formulated.[25]

The hierarchical model, applied under present conditions, also tends to weaken democratic accountability. By locating responsibility at the highest levels of government, the model neglects accountability not only for the many decisions made by lower- and middle-level officials, but also for some of the decisions made by higher-level officials as well. In general, the higher the level of government, the less significant is any particular decision in our overall appraisal of the performance of an official. We may, for example, ignore a President's deplorable position on health policy if we approve of his stand on other issues. But we would be less tolerant of the official whose principal job was to formulate and advocate this policy.

Because the hierarchical model directs our criticism upward and away from many of the actual decisionmakers in government, it encourages a ritualistic taking of responsibility: high officials regularly accept 'full responsibility' for decisions of their subordinates, whether or not the superiors had anything to do with the decisions.[26] This ritual depreciates the democratic value of ascriptions of responsibility since the persons who actually made the decisions escape scrutiny, and the officials who 'take responsibility' often suffer no political punishment (and sometimes may reap political rewards for seeming to be courageous leaders who do not pass the buck). When formal responsibility diverges radically from actual responsibility, even this ritualistic responsibility begins to disappear, but genuine accountability of lower-level officials rarely takes its place. In the Canadian system, for example, the principle that ministers are strictly responsible for the conduct of civil servants is increasingly ignored. But the other part of the doctrine of ministerial responsibility – the principle that ministers should not publicly blame individual civil servants – remains very much in force.[27]

The hierarchical model also discourages – and may even prevent – reforms that would strengthen the influence of citizens over the bureaucrats who actually make decisions and policies. In the absence of an effective hierarchical system, such reforms may be the only hope of establishing any accountability in the administrative process. If we assume, with the hierarchical model, that citizens through their elected representatives hold bureaucrats accountable, then we will discount changes that would bring citizens directly into the administrative process. Indeed, many reforms, such as requiring bureaucrats to consult with citizens or even to publicize their proceedings more extensively, would on the hierarchical model distort the democratic process by permitting particular groups to try to influence policy after the general public interest had already been determined by the legislators and elected executives.

But if we recognize that in any current system, this process is flawed in various ways at almost every stage, we are less likely to rely exclusively on the hierarchical model to ensure the accountability of administrators. The inequalities in the electoral process, the distortions in the legislative process, the diffusion of executive authority – all give ample reason to seek alternatives to the hierarchical model. Other models cannot completely dispense with hierarchy since it is an essential feature of bureaucracy, but they may moderate hierarchy by emphasizing other foundations for responsibility.

A second approach to reconciling bureaucracy and democracy relies on the professionalism of a civil service. This professionalist model first appears in systematic form in Hegel's theory of the state. Detached from the personal ties of family and friendship and educated in 'ethical conduct,' Hegel's civil servants express the universal interest of the state.[28] Although embracing very different conceptions of the general good, many democratic theorists adopt some form of the professionalist model to locate the proper place of administrators in a democracy.[29] Proponents of the model hold, first, that a substantial amount of administrative discretion is inevitable in the modern state; secondly, that this discretion is also desirable if bureaucrats exercise it according to the principles of their profession; and thirdly, that in order to enforce these principles, administrators should have professional education and be responsive to the professional opinion of their colleagues. This model may be compatible with the hierarchical model – some theorists explicitly combine them – but those who stress professionalism must grant administrators considerable independence from their political superiors. The professionalist model therefore must find its democratic legitimacy not only or mainly in the hierarchical chain leading back to the electorate, but in the content of the norms establishing the claims to expertise of the profession.

Whether professionalism encourages democratic deliberation, then, depends in part on what kind of expertise or special competence we attribute to the profession of public administration. If, as in some interpretations of the model, the expertise consists in a kind of technical knowledge, such as policy analysis, the model tends to insulate bureaucrats from substantive moral and political criticism in the same way that the hierarchical model does. The techniques of policy analysis, like the methods of utilitarianism and welfare economics from which they originate, are hardly morally and politically neutral.[30] In so far as policy analysts persuade politicians and citizens to accept their conclusions as completely objective, they use their professional standing to conceal the moral and political choices inherent in their methods of analysis. They thereby stifle the process of deliberation about these choices in a wider public forum.

More recently, however, administrators and politicians have begun to dispute about the use of the technique itself. Analysts who oppose much government regulation of occupational health and safety in the United States insist that every rule be justified by cost–benefit analysis. Their critics argue that such analysis tends to ignore the long-term benefits of regulation.[31] In so far as the method of analysis becomes a point of political contention in this way, administrators and their academic consultants cannot stand aloof from the political fray. A dispute, even among professionals, about the basis of professional expertise may contribute to democratic deliberation. But if it does so, it also exposes the weakness of any interpretation of the professionalist model that rests on technical competence. Such disputes transcend disagreement about technique. They turn on differences about the content of policy, and in resolving these differences technical experts can claim no special authority.

Other versions of the model locate the expertise of the profession in a more general competence – a cultivated ability to apply to public policy the fundamental values of a society. On its face, these interpretations of the model seem more democratic: bureaucrats appeal to values that all citizens share, and therefore engage in deliberation in which all citizens may take part. But we must ask what gives bureaucrats any special standing in this deliberation, as the claim of professionalism would require?

One answer cites the institutional position of bureaucrats: because they hold permanent appointments and are not subject to direct political pressures, they are less likely to act on their political biases and therefore are more likely to formulate and implement policy in an impartial manner. That institutional position overcomes biases of class and ideology – particularly the anti-socialism ascribed to top civil servants in some governments – has often been doubted, most recently in Australian political debates. But even if civil servants do not succumb to such biases, they may use their institutional position to pursue the interests of the profession itself in maintaining and enlarging its influence within government. Many policies in the modern state now affect the employment and compensation of civil servants, and public employee unions increasingly have pressed for pay increases and job protections that the politicians and other citizens deem contrary to the public interest. Also, civil servants may resist governmental reforms that appear to threaten their own influence, particularly on economic policy. Such resistance evidently played a part in Britain in the dispute about the Expenditure Committee's recommendation to return the management functions of the Civil Service Department to the Treasury.[32]

The other response to the question of the special competence of civil servants appeals to professional education. Through a broadened curriculum in schools of public policy, persons destined for careers in government would acquire the sensitivity and skills to shape public policy according to democratic values. This response offers a more promising basis for a professionalism that could be compatible with democracy, but advocates of this approach have barely begun to think about what would constitute the content of such a professional education in social values.[33] It cannot be sufficient for future bureaucrats even to learn how to translate the fundamental values of a society into public policy, since they will often have to choose among values about which citizens fundamentally disagree.

The distinctive form of accountability in the professions is collegial. Individual professionals (in principle) answer to their colleagues through the licensing and disciplinary procedures of professional associations or through the less formal peer review as in the scientific community. This kind of professional accountability is not without problems. Even when effective, it perpetuates a kind of paternalism in the professions that ill serves democracy.[34] Public administration may escape such problems, but only because it is not fully a profession. If public administrators have not agreed upon the standards and established the organizations that would call errant members to account, the professionalist model, applied to bureaucrats, lacks any adequate basis for accountability.

Neither has the search for other forms of accountability been notably successful. Some theorists have urged 'representative bureaucracy', which would recruit and promote public employees so that the ethnic, class and sexual composition of the civil service would approximate that of society as a whole.[35] While a representative bureaucracy might contribute to a more just policy of employment, it is not likely to reconcile professionalism and democracy. The social and ethnic origins of bureaucrats evidently affect very little the decisions and policies they make. Whatever their background, most civil servants quickly adapt to the expectations of their office and the prevailing culture of the bureaucracy.

More recently, other theorists have attempted to democratize the profession of public administration more directly. This 'new public administration' bids bureaucrats to serve the interests of the disadvantaged members of society.[36] This role will usually put administrators in confrontation with elected officials, who speak for majorities and privileged minorities in society.

The new public administrators are to be 'strong on personal commitment to justice for the poor, rather than on hierarchical obedience and professional neutralism.'[37] This new breed of bureaucrat may (or may not) strike us as a more virtuous public servant, but the new public administration offers no reason to suppose that its practitioners would be any more democratic than the old-style administrators. In face of the inevitable and legitimate disagreements about what justice requires in any policy, the new bureaucrats can look only to their own moral sense and that of their like-minded colleagues. Without abandoning their professionalism, they cannot permit other citizens – not even the poor themselves – to dictate the moral content of their decisions.

Despite its radical tone, the new public administration solves the problem of democratic accountability no better than the other versions of the professionalist model. The idea of a profession – whatever particular content we give it – implies exclusion and self-regulation that do not comport well with control by those who are not members of the profession. We may soften this tension in various ways, as proponents of the professionalist model do, but in so far as we do so, we supplant the model with other forms of democratic responsibility.

The remaining models I examine prescribe that citizens take part in the administrative process, but they conceive this participation in quite different ways. What I shall call the pluralist model would provide opportunities ('multiple points of access') for individuals and groups to petition, advise and in other ways influence administrative agencies.[38] Bureaucrats would then aggregate the claims of the individuals and groups who happen to take advantage of these opportunities. The other model – which may more justly claim the title of participatory – would expand the opportunities for participation by citizens whose voices the political process otherwise neglects.[39] On this view, bureaucrats would not simply adjudicate among contending groups who appear before them, but would encourage other groups and individuals to come forward. Bureaucrats themselves would bear some responsibility for making participation more egalitarian.

Traditional democratic theorists – even those who favor greater participation in other spheres of political life – have generally opposed any active involvement of citizens in the administration of government. Rousseau forbids citizens to take part in the making of executive decisions, which require judgments about particular individuals and would therefore corrupt the universality of the general will.[40] Similarly, Mill fears that partiality and incompetence result if private citizens have much to do with administration; he also cautions that responsibility becomes diffused when many people are charged with making executive decisions.[41] These warnings anticipate in a general way the major problems that both the pluralist and the participatory models have encountered in recent times (though the pluralist approach, I shall suggest, seems less capable of overcoming them).

The pluralist model comes closer to describing the pattern of administrative politics that prevails in modern democracies. By far the most active participants in national administration in recent years are interest groups, chiefly composed not of ordinary citizens but of highly-organized elites who represent various (predominantly economic) sectors of society.[42] These groups influence administrators in a variety of ways – ranging from informal personal contacts and exchanges of information to legally required consultation as in the *remiss* system in the Scandinavian governments or the group representation on official advisory boards of ministries in Germany. In some countries (for example, the Netherlands) interest groups actually administer much of the complex system of economic regulation of industry. Because the interactions between administrators and these groups are so intimate, and their joint decisions so independent of electoral and legislative control, administrators – ensconced in 'captive agencies' – often serve only the interests of the dominant groups in the society.

This kind of politics, it has often been observed, creates many problems for democracy; my concern is with the less noticed difficulties it presents for a democratic concept of administrative responsibility. The pluralist model, applied in current systems, focuses political deliberation on how well bureaucrats manage to aggregate the various demands that interest groups put forward. It permits bureaucrats to justify their decisions by claiming that they are merely arbitrating among groups, not making policy. When bureaucrats cannot maintain the pose of neutral arbiter, they may claim that they can take account of only those interests expressed by groups that actually participate in administrative proceedings. In either case, we do not ask them to justify why they choose to listen to only those groups, or why they do not attempt to bring other groups into the process. The model does not necessarily assume that all interests in society are represented in this process, but if they are not, administrators are not responsible for compensating for the misrepresentation. Yet, as we have seen, administrators can, and often do, use their discretion to influence what groups come forward and can also contribute to changing the structure of opportunities and incentives for participation. The pluralist model exempts bureaucrats from any praise or blame for using, or failing to use, their discretion in these ways.

The pluralist model also confounds the process of accountability. When bureaucrats and interest groups interact so closely, we may not be able to discover who actually contributed to a particular policy or decision, and to what extent, even when the participants make no effort to conceal their contributions. Moreover, the sheer number and variety of organizations that have a hand in the administrative process frustrate tracing their role in the making of policies. It is doubtful that anyone can accurately identify all of the enormous number of quasi-non-governmental organizations ('quangos') that carry on much governmental business in Britain.[43] Even if we can identify these and other organizations as agents of certain policies, we usually have no way to punish (or reward) them, except in the most flagrant cases. They stand outside government, yet they govern.

More recently, some governments have sought to expand the number and kind of groups that take part in the administrative process.[44] In the United States, some public interest groups now have legal standing before administrative agencies, and may initiate challenges rather than merely respond to decisions. Some agencies pay the expenses of groups that wish to participate in rule-making proceedings. These reforms no doubt mitigate the unfairness in the administrative process, and are for this reason to be welcomed. They also encourage more groups to take part in the process and in this respect tilt the pluralist politics in the direction of the participatory model.

But these reforms remain well within the bounds of the pluralist model, and do not overcome the deficiencies of that model. Bureaucrats still pose as mere adjudicators of the claims of contending groups. They need not take any responsibility for bringing more citizens into the administrative process as the participatory model urges, or even for maintaining a fair balance of representation in the process. Moreover, by multiplying the number and kinds of groups in the process, the reforms may actually further erode accountability. Faced with so many competing groups, bureaucrats can easily play them off one against another, blaming all or any of them for whatever policies are adopted, or – what is more likely – for the stalemates that produce no policy at all.

Proponents of the participatory model go beyond pluralist reforms by seeking to make participation more egalitarian. To pursue this aim, they usually turn their attention to local government because there the structures of power seem more accessible and the patterns of decisionmaking more comprehensible to ordinary citizens. Local bureaucracies that act on behalf of the central government have been the chief targets of reform. Early efforts proceeded fitfully in isolated localities in various countries, but a sustained nation-wide movement began with the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 in the United States. The Act called for 'maximum feasible participation' of the poor in the planning and conduct of programs designed to reduce poverty.[45]

The ill-fated War on Poverty has been exhaustively examined by social scientists, who generally agree that the programs the Act created did not have much effect on poverty. But it is by no means certain that the participation mandated by the Act contributed to this failure, as some analysts suggest.

Nor is it clear that the participation itself had little value for citizens, as others charge. The kind and extent of participation varied greatly from city to city, and often when a community action agency threatened to become effective in mobilizing the poor, the established local authorities cut off their funds or reorganized the agencies. In any event, the Act spawned demands for increased citizen participation in many other areas of public life. Since 1964, Congress has required citizen participation in the administration of policies for urban renewal, community development, revenue sharing, flood control and health care, among others.

Even after nearly two decades, the evidence remains inconclusive, and both those who oppose and those who favor the participatory model can find support for their views. Its critics contend that these reforms brought into the political process not the poor and alienated but the mostly middle-class and politically sophisticated. Although representation of minorities (especially blacks) increased, the reforms simply added another group to the competition among elites. The participatory model would thus revert to the pluralist model, giving administrators yet another reason to conceive of their role as neutral arbiters: how can administrators dare speak for the poor when the poor now have their own spokesmen? Furthermore, since the jurisdiction of the representative bodies strictly follows the boundaries of policy areas, political deliberation disregards such important questions as the priorities among policies in the various areas.

Proponents of the participatory model could reply that the addition of new elites, especially from groups that previously did not take part, has at the least increased the attention that administrators and citizens give to the question of who participates. The issue of racial representation has won a more prominent place on the agenda of administrative politics, and administrative structures are now more often examined for their effects on the political power of various other disadvantaged groups. It is true that most of the new participatory boards, councils and the like tend to specialize in particular policy areas. But the participatory model itself does not require such specialization. It is possible to imagine a system of participatory bodies, structured so that at each higher level the body would take a more general perspective, progressively integrating more policy areas. The recommendations of the board that oversees the administration of health care, for example, might be reviewed by a board that examines health care in the context of mass transit plans, community development and welfare policy. Such a system could be extended to provide geographical as well as functional coordination, and in principle could be applied at the national as well as the local level. In such elaborate form, this system would put hierarchy back into the participatory model, but it would be a hierarchy of citizens instead of bureaucrats and politicians.

Critics of the participatory model also worry about its effects on accountability. As more citizens take part in administration, they are less likely to be informed and skillful in politics, and more likely to be vulnerable to the blandishments of bureaucrats. In place of the captive agencies of pluralist administration, we find captive citizens, coopted to legitimize decisions that bureaucrats want made. Cooptative participation obscures the identity of the agents of policy, making accountability more difficult. When citizens do manage to control the bureaucrats through the institutions proposed by the participatory model, they usually act on their own, free from any further requirement to answer to other citizens. The Health Systems Agencies in the United States, and the Health Council System in Scotland, for example, both lack adequate procedures for communicating with constituents, let alone for giving constituents power to influence their representatives on the board.[46]

To avoid cooptative participation, defenders of the participatory model urge that governments provide programs to educate citizens who assume positions on the various boards and councils that control administrators. Some 'participatory experiments' in Sweden, Austria, and the Netherlands suggest that even in science policy, citizen advisory councils can be effective (though controversial) if their members have the benefit of educational programs.[47]

The problem of the accountability of the citizens who serve as representatives could be partly overcome by increasing the publicity about the proceedings in which they take part. The Swedish practice of maintaining written records of administrative deliberations and permitting citizens (including the press) to inspect them at any time could encourage not only bureaucrats but also citizen representatives to be more responsible.[48] The flaws in accountability would not be so troublesome if the citizens who participate in administration did not come disproportionately from certain classes and groups. Most recent reforms favor those citizens who already have the time and interest to participate; for example, in the community action agencies in the poverty program the routine clerical positions were salaried but the more influential policymaking positions were not. While proponents of the participatory model would not, like an Aristotelian democrat, replace administrators with citizens chosen by lot, they would select by lot at least some of the citizens who serve on boards or in other ways participate in administration. Like citizens who take their turn on juries, these citizens would be paid.

The movement toward greater participation in administration has fallen far short of the goals of the participatory model. But the difficulties we have noticed in the participatory reforms are not so much failures of the model as failures to apply the model consistently and comprehensively. Unlike the effects of incompletely applying the hierarchical model, those of the participatory model do not typically worsen the condition of democratic responsibility. The changes the participatory model prescribes usually improve deliberation and accountability, and, when they do not, the model itself provides the basis for criticism and further reform. Unlike the professionalist model, the participatory model does not contain any principles, such as claims to special competence, that may inherently constrain democratic responsibility. And unlike the pluralist model, the participatory model does not relieve bureaucrats of the responsibility to consider the views and encourage the involvement of citizens beyond those who happen to take part in the administrative process at any particular time.

If the participatory model is in these respects superior to the others, it may be the best starting-point from which to continue a search for the place of bureaucracy in a democracy. But the model bristles with problems of its own, and though some may be overcome through further exploration of the ideas and institutions mentioned earlier, others seem more intractable. Perhaps the most troublesome is the accountability of the citizens who participate in the administrative process to the citizens who do not participate.

Even if we were to accept the participatory model, we would need to find a way to combine with it the indispensable features of the other models. We cannot completely do without hierarchy in administration: when the legislative will is clear and proper, bureaucrats should not obstruct it. Moreover, legislators (and elected officials more generally) should have the authority to tell bureaucrats how to organize administrative processes. On a participatory model, legislators would still be the principal architects even of structures that encourage citizens to take part in administration. They would devote more time to making the administrative process more democratic than to eliminating administrative discretion.

Professionalism, too, must have a place in any effective bureaucracy. The participatory model may encourage us to take a more favorable view of rotation of office, and perhaps even political patronage. But we can hardly neglect the need for expertise and political independence in modern government – a need that a professional civil service may not always fulfill but for which it seems essential. The various boards of citizen representatives that the model recommends would not preclude the exercise of considerable discretion by professionals in administration. Many of these boards would stand ready to intervene, but only if administrators consistently reached decisions that citizens deemed wrong. Finally, we should wish to preserve some of the procedures that the pluralist model prescribes, such as representation of public interest groups before administrative agencies. If the participatory model provides a promising approach to the problem of the place of bureaucracy in a democracy, it is at best an incomplete approach.

Apart from its inherent difficulties, the model has so far failed to accommodate adequately the legitimate claims of the other models.

Neither democratic theory nor democratic practice has yet discovered a form of administrative responsibility that would let democrats comfortably consort with bureaucrats in the governing of society. To appreciate the extent of the failure of democracy to come to terms with the problem of bureaucracy is not to show where success might lie. But it is to take a necessary step in the pursuit of democratic ways to subdue bureaucratic power in the modern state.

Notes

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This very short book is, as the author claims, an essay in applied social philosophy. It explores the notion of 'community', a notion which has become so central to our description of social and political experience. Plant argues that 'community' has a wide range of both descriptive meanings and evaluative connotations, and he links these meanings and connotations to their history in ideological confrontation. Chapter 3 of this book is perhaps the most important one for students of this course.

Pusey, M. *Dynamics of Bureaucracy: A Case Analysis in Education*. Wiley, Brisbane, 1976.
Pusey is one of the leading critical sociologists in Australia. His book is a sociological inquiry into the problems of bureaucratic organisation. The problems are pursued in an analysis of the internal dynamics of an Australian state education department. Chapter 2, 'The theoretical problem', reviews a number of models of organisation and should prove extremely useful.

Urban, M. E. *The Ideology of Administration: American and Soviet Cases*. State University of New York Press, Albany, NY.
Urban explores the notion of administrative leadership as it has been presented in its various guises by a whole multitude of theorists both in the United States and in the Soviet Union. Urban shows clearly how authors from both countries have sought to mask underlying power relations in hierarchical organisations through an ideology of administration. Chapters 3 and 4 should prove more useful than others.

Weber, M. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1970.
This is a compilation of Weber's most important writings on social and political theory. The book contains a very useful introduction providing a biographical view and discussing Weber's intellectual orientation. Sections IV and VIII are essential reading for anyone attempting to understand the impact of Weber's writings on the development of modern administrative theory.

About the author

Fazal Rizvi is a lecturer in social and administrative studies in the School of Education at Deakin University. Before completing his doctorate in the philosophy of education at King's College, University of London, Fazal taught in primary and secondary schools. His research interests include policy studies; values and educational research; ethics and educational administration; and the problems of democratic reform in education. He has published articles on the philosophy of educational administration, on multiculturalism, and on democratic theory and practice in education. He is currently evaluating, with Stephen Kemmis and Rob Walker, the Victorian *Participation and Equity Program*.

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